MY EARLY TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES

IN

AMERICA AND ASIA

MY EARLY TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES IN AMERICA AND ASIA

BY

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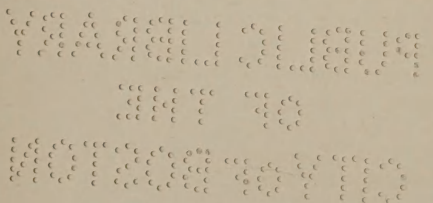

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THE SUEZ CANAL.

CHAPTER I.

The Tongue of the Egyptian Sea—The Commerce of the Ancient Egyptians—The Ancient Canals—The Circumnavigators of Africa—Napoleon Bonaparte's Ideas of a Direct Ship Canal—The Estimates of Lepere—The Greatest Idea of the Nineteenth Century.

ISMAILIA, ISTHMUS OF SUEZ, *November 18th*, 1869.

THE sandy Isthmus of Suez was considered by the Kings of Ancient Egypt as a good defence against the Assyrians and Persians. The two seas which bound it north and south were almost connected by a chain of salt lakes which occupied every depression on the isthmus.

There is evidence enough to prove that in prehistoric times the Red Sea and the Mediterranean once commingled their waters, and that the sand which formed the isthmus had been gradually heaped up by action of strong wind and tides. For in the time of Isaiah this process was taking place. The Bitter Lakes, now so called, were then but the

extreme reach of the Red Sea, and when Isaiah fulminates against Egypt he threatens to cut off the tongue of the Egyptian sea. This reach of sea, according to the laws of nature, was even then being isolated. A bar was forming at the southern extremity of the Bitter Lakes, which we find this day to have expanded into the width of eighteen miles of finest sand, and the same process of bar-making was found in operation by the originators of the Canal at about a mile to the southward of Suez. A little eastward of the Bitter Lakes was the famous Bog, in which it was believed several hostile armies had been engulfed. Then came the Bitter Lakes, 23 miles long: Lake Timsah, 2 miles long; the Ballah Lakes, 3 miles; and the extensive lagoon of Menzaleh, 28 miles.

Between these lakes ran a sinuous stream towards the Pelusiac marshes, where there were salt pits for the manufacture of salt.

To any powerful commercial nation existing about the year 1000 B.C., the plan of a canal through the isthmus would no doubt have been deemed more feasible than in the beginning of the nineteenth century. It only required a trench between these lacustrine links, and the canal was done. But in the year 1000 B.C. the old Egyptians regarded with horror those who navigated the deep and dwelt in ships. Nay, those unfortunate sailors, whose misfortune it was to be wrecked on the coast of Egypt, were immediately offered up as sacrifices to the god Busiris. The Egyptians possessed no forests wherewith to

build seaworthy vessels. Their Nile galleys were built expressly for river trade between the Delta and the intermediate ports on the Nile. But they regarded the ocean with horror, notwithstanding that they saw the merchant-ships of Tyre, Sidon, Carthage, and Greece in their ports. The Phœnicians and Greeks swept the seas from the Palestine coast as far as the Pillars of Hercules, from Pelusium to Salamis and the Peloponnesus. Solomon despatched his ships down the Red Sea from Eziongeber to Ophir and Ind, for gold, balsam, and spices.

But it was impossible that people naturally brave and great in arts as the Egyptians should long stand aloof from the benefits to be derived from commerce and ocean navigation, and accordingly we find them under Psammeticus rivalling the Greeks and Phœnicians in maritime pursuits. Their corn, linen, and drugs, their exquisite and rich manufactures in gold and silver, were exchanged by them for Cyprian copper, Lebanon cedars, Tyrian dyes, and ships from Sidon and Tarsus. This mutual reciprocity, which had long before made Sidon a mart of nations and Tyre a maker of kings, made Pelusium a great city, Sais prosperous, and Naucratis famous. The corn of the Nile and the harvests of Egypt were exchanged for the purple and rich vestments of Sidon and Tyre. Phœnicia waxed strong, and the cities of the Delta became prosperous under Psammeticus. On the fall of Thebes and Memphis the coast cities of Pelusium, Sais, Mendes, and Canopus were established.

The King of Egypt, Necho II., son of Psammeticus, was a genius for his times. He understood the value of commerce, and his views became enlarged by the prosperity which followed his efforts. He heard of the gold of Ophir, of the precious stones that lay beyond the sea. Could the ships from the Nile but trade directly thither, what treasures might not flow into his coffers! What new lands might not be conquered! Before such visions of boundless wealth, with the means of realising them at hand, Necho determined upon constructing a canal that should connect the Nile with the Red Sea, which should start from Bubastis, the then capital of Egypt, by Pathumos, through a natural sandy ravine, past Necropolis and into the Bitter Lakes, which at that time were separated from the Red Sea by only a sand bar. The canal was to be wide enough for two ships to pass each other freely when abreast; and to be sufficiently deep for the largest ship of the period. Though a most roundabout canal for Phœnician and Tyrian ships to sail to India, yet it was practicable, as Bubastis was but sixty miles from the Bitter Lakes. One hundred and twenty thousand slaves were employed on the undertaking for three years, at the end of which time it began to be suspected that when the canal would be completed the Red Sea would overflow Goshen, inundate the Delta, and ruin Egypt. Necho was therefore warned that by constructing this canal for navigation, even should destruction to the land by salt water not be the result,

barbarous invaders from unknown lands would by its means invade Egypt. The work, though so near its completion, was therefore reluctantly relinquished.

Traces of this canal have been discovered not far from Suez, with banks in some places lined with brick and granite. Necho seems to have had a most enterprising character. Perceiving the danger of persisting in his first project, Necho commanded his pilots to search for some other channel by which the Nile might find an outlet to the Red Sea. From Eziongeber these daring sailors set sail, steering down the Red Sea, keeping close to the Egyptian coast, stopping at each port as they came to it for trade. After passing the Equator they could find no people with whom they could trade or from whom they could purchase provisions; so they had to lay up their ships, plough land, sow, reap, and with the seed of the harvest provision their vessels for the continuation of their voyage.

In the third year they came to the Pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar and the opposite African mountains), and saw their own friendly sea before them. Continuing their voyage along the shores of the Mediterranean, past Mauritania and Carthage, they arrived at King Necho's city after an absence of three years. Such a long voyage could not be repeated in the life of a king already far advanced in years. This was the first voyage round Africa. Hanno tried it subsequently, but failed; for before reaching the

Equator he had to return, owing to the scarcity of provisions.

According to Herodotus, Necho abandoned his efforts to construct a canal that he might direct his mind to the defence of Egypt against the Assyrian king. A deep trench was ordered by him to be cut from the Bitter Lakes to the mouth of the Nile, near which Pelusium, the frontier post, stood. It was intended as a defence against the Assyrians, but through its influence the land through which the sweet waters flowed bloomed like a garden, and the arid desert, hitherto but a vast waste, teemed with spontaneous vegetation. The canal from Bubastis to the Bitter Lakes displaced the briny element which formerly filled them with Nile water, and the trench from the Bitter Lakes to Pelusium being filled with the river water, was not only a defence to Egypt against predatory armies from Palestine and Arabia, but served to transform a large tract of land from sterility into fruitful plains.

After the death of Necho II. the idea of connecting the Nile with the Red Sea was again mooted and carried forward with considerable vigour. The work was continued as far as the Crocodile Lakes, as the Bitter Lakes were afterwards named. These lakes, being filled with Nile water, became famous for the large number of crocodiles, water fowl, and fish, which had migrated hither with the flood flowing from Nubia and Abyssinia.

Nectanebo I., in the year 380 B.C., when rebelling

against the Persian power which had been established by Cambyses, had recourse to the same mode of defence originated by his great ancestor Necho II. in 618 B.C., *viz.*, to dig trenches from Pelusium to the Bitter Lakes, and to strengthen his fortress in the Delta; and so well were these water defences planned, that in the fall, when the periodical overflow came, the Nile completed what Nectanebo had begun, and Egypt was thus delivered from the Persian yoke.

In the year 284 B.C. Ptolemy Philadelphus became King of Egypt. Among the great works of his reign are the erection of lighthouses on the Isle of Pharos and the construction of a royal burial-place at Alexandria. He also turned his attention to the navigation of the Red Sea, which presented a great difficulty to sailing vessels, inasmuch as the wind blew from the north during nine months of the year, and the Arab captains found it impossible to beat up the Red Sea as far as Eziongeber. The ship captains, in order to avoid this difficulty, were obliged to contract with merchants that they should meet them as far south as possible with caravans, by which mode commerce ran through other channels, and new cities constantly sprang up on the southern coasts of Egypt, such as Suakin, Cosseir, and Massowah. To obviate the difficulty of navigating this sea, and at the same time to secure the commerce which sought an outlet in Egypt, Philadelphus built a city and called it Berenice, after his sister, 200 miles below Cosseir.

From Berenice caravans of camels would convey

the merchandise to Bubastis, the capital of Lower Egypt. He also rebuilt Cosseir, the ancient Ennum, according to Strabo.

Finally, Philadelphus built a city near where Suez now stands, and called it Arsinoe, after his youngest sister, and re-opened the canal upon which Necho II. and Darius Hystaspes had spent their energies. By means of this canal ships were to pass between Arsinoe and Bubastis. He re-opened the canal successfully as far as the Bitter Lakes, which, through the neglect of previous governments, had been considerably filled up by the encroaching sands of the desert. The completion of the undertaking was prevented by engineers, who declared that the waters of the canal would be several feet lower than the Red Sea, and for that reason would be a sea canal, which would neither benefit commerce, irrigate the fields, nor furnish cities with fresh water.

The next time history records an incident connected with this canal is when Cleopatra, "Egypt's foul disgrace, the firebrand of Rome," after the disaster at Actium seeking a means of escaping from dread Octavius, suggests to Mark Antony that they should convey their ships across the isthmus to the Red Sea and fly together to unknown lands. Had it not been for the despair which had seized Antony it is probable that the canal, which must have been open at the time, would have been used by the royal fugitives to transport their riches and their faithful

few to another shore, where another empire might have been founded.

Trajan, in the year 110 A.D., caused the canal first made by Necho, and reconstructed by Darius and Philadelphus, to be opened once more. Trajan's engineers commenced it from a place called Babylon, near Memphis, which was nearly fifty feet higher than from Bubastis, that it might pour into the Red Sea, obviating in this way the dreaded danger of an inundation of Egypt by the Egyptian sea. It passed by Heliopolis, Heropolis, and Serapeum, and, joining the Bitter Lakes, emptied into the sea ten miles south of Arsinoe. The continual shifting of the sands had already, in the brief space of three centuries, completely separated Arsinoe from the sea which, it will be recollected, was built by Philadelphus as the port of his canal.

Whether the canal was kept open by the Roman prefects during the occupation of Egypt by the Romans, history does not relate. We are left to surmise that so long as they continued to be masters of the world such a work, so conducive to maritime wealth and prosperity, could not have been neglected.

The last time history speaks of this celebrated canal is in the year 638 A.D., in connection with the conquest of Egypt by Abu Amrou, General of Caliph Omar. Amrou, wishing to surprise his master with the vast riches he had acquired by the possession of Egypt, re-opened the canal along its whole length and sent so many shiploads of grain to Clysmon that,

to use the exaggerated words of the Oriental historian, it required a train of camels from the holy city of Mecca to Clysmon to convey the corn away.

From the above it will be perceived that a canal across the isthmus has for ages been considered a necessity for Egypt ; and that after being constructed it became choked up whenever it was neglected ; and that a century or so was sufficient to obliterate almost all traces of it.

The utility of a canal across the isthmus, which would permit ocean ships to cross from sea to sea, was as apparent to the French Directory and Napoleon Bonaparte as it had been to Pharaoh Necho and Philadelphus.

At first Bonaparte thought it would be best to re-open the work of Necho, but after much investigating and surveying which occupied several months, the question flashed through his mind, "Why not connect the two seas by a direct canal, which shall float frigates and warships ?" The vastness of the undertaking, the important results which would inevitably accrue from the canal, dawned upon him ; and it was then in a moment of enthusiasm, we presume, that he uttered the celebrated dictum, "Whatever Power holds the Isthmus will be Master of India."

While staying at Suez, Napoleon intently studied every aspect of the question. The isthmus was explored and reported upon for a direct canal between Pelusium and Suez. But again the engineers fell into the traditional error of believing that the waters

of the Red Sea were thirty-two feet higher than the Mediterranean, though the two seas were but ninety miles apart. An engineer named La Place and the mathematician Fourier protested against the opinion, asserting that such ideas were against accepted theories of the system of the globe and ocean equilibrium.

Later hydrographical experiments demonstrated the falsity of the opinion which had been maintained with such obstinacy for two thousand five hundred years.

Napoleon's engineers proposed the reconstruction of the old canal of the Pharaohs. The remains of it had been discovered at several places running from the modern Zagazig or ancient Bubastis in the direction of the Bitter Lakes, and the work of reconstruction would cost, according to Lepere, between 20,000,000 and 30,000,000 francs, or between £800,000 and £1,200,000. For such a modest sum it is not likely that Lepere could have entertained the idea of building a ship canal of any depth.

Lepere made his estimates even after the brilliant idea of a direct ship canal had been broached, because great difficulties would prevent its accomplishment.

He believed Suez destined to the same fate as had overtaken Arsinoe two thousand years before, or as Clysmon two hundred years later. Suez, in like manner, in another half century would be completely isolated by the desert; for even then the distance between the town and roadstead was three miles. The other "insurmountable" difficulty was the port of Pelusium. No human engineering could ever pre-

vent the creation of sand bars, which would always nullify efforts to establish a deep harbour. Since no engineer or mathematician was able to controvert these theories of Lepere, the idea of a direct ocean canal was given up; and other circumstances finally prevented Napoleon re-opening Necho's canal.

All Napoleon's aims and desires, hopes and ambitions, in the Orient were annihilated by Nelson and Sir Ralph Abercrombie at Aboukir.

The neck of land which connected the continents of Asia and Africa was but ninety miles across and consisted mostly of pure sand. While looking at the map of the eastern world and tracing the route *viâ* Suez between England and India, France and Cambodia and Cochin China, Spain and the Philippine Islands, Portugal and Goa, Holland and Java, Asiatic Turkey and Arabia, Europe and Eastern Africa, it almost seems superfluous to dwell upon the advantages likely to be gained by the cutting of the isthmus. With the incalculable advantages and benefits depending upon the excavation of a canal, it was not possible that the nineteenth century, which had inaugurated its advent with the proclamation of the most startling ideas and the birth of mighty projects, could permit this one greatest idea to sleep, while the whole world cried "Progress!"—while the American continent was about to be banded with iron —while the oceans were ploughed by thousands of steamers, and the deep seas were about to be bridged with electric cables. Progress cried out against this

barrier of sand, and proclaimed that Africa must be severed from Asia, and that the Red Sea should be connected with the Mediterranean. I am about to relate how it was accomplished.

CHAPTER II.

The Egyptian Napoleon—Mehemet Ali and the Ship Canal—Linant Bey's Project—The Constructor of the Canal Appears—The Deed of Concession—The International Commission and their Studies of the Route—Their Report and Conclusions—The Formation of the Suez Canal Company—British Opposition—The Auxiliary Canal—The Construction of the Maritime Canal—The Filling of Lake Timsah—Preparations for the Ceremony of Opening the Canal.

ISMAILIA, *November 18th*, 1869.

MEHEMET ALI deserves to be called the Napoleon of Egypt. While he lived success attended him in almost every war he undertook, though England proved too strong for him, as she had proved to Napoleon. Among the many vast designs which he cherished was the construction of a ship canal from the Nile to the sea, and the re-opening of Bubastis and the Bitter Lake Canal. Had a really sensible plan been proposed to him there is not the least doubt that he would have exerted all his autocratic authority for its execution. But the numerous schemes proposed to him were all in connection with the Nile and the Red Sea Canal, which his practical

sense rejected. The experiences of twenty-five centuries were not lost upon him. Egyptian history informed him how often the Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, the Romans, and the Caliphs had devoted their energies to constructing and reconstructing that canal, and demonstrated to him the fruitlessness of continuing it.

Soon after the peace of 1833, by which Mehemet Ali was confirmed in the hereditary possession of Egypt, a party of Englishmen explored the isthmus, among whom was Major-General Chesney who, after a casual inspection of the localities, asserted before a Commission that the idea of a difference between the level of the two seas was completely erroneous. In 1840, another survey was made by the English, and Chesney's opinion was confirmed by scientific inquiries.

In February, 1841, Linant Bey, Chief Engineer to Mehemet Ali, in conjunction with Messrs. Anderson (of the Peninsular and Oriental Company), John and George Gliddon, formed a company to construct a ship canal from Pelusium to Suez. Inquiries and laborious surveys had demonstrated its complete feasibility, and no one now entertained a doubt respecting the project. But the capital required for its construction was too large for the period, and the company soon broke up without accomplishing anything.

In 1846, Linant Bey's scheme of a canal was taken up by a new company, of which the great Stephenson, Negretti, Paulin, Talabut, and M. Enfantin were members. The organisation of this company was

mainly owing to the efforts of M. Enfantin. The Société d'Études du Canal de Suez had for its purpose the making of "a kind of a Bosphorus through the desert of Suez." From the series of reports which were drawn up by European and Egyptian engineers relative to the respective seas, the features of the isthmus, the nature of the soil, and all that might be said for and against the feasibility of construction and advantages of the canal, a member of the company drew up an elaborate review to be submitted to the association, and likewise sketched a plan of a canal which would run from Suez to Cairo, follow and cross the Nile and debouch into the port of Alexandria. But as this project was for a most indirect route it is needless to say that it was overruled and quashed.

Though these later surveys had followed one upon the other quickly, and the truth of the general theories advanced, many still remained in doubt, because the Commission of 1799, under Bonaparte, had formed such widely different ideas. To satisfy the doubts of those whose interests would be promoted by the Suez Canal, another survey was made, likewise under Linant Bey, and the results verified the previous investigations. The level of the two seas was proved to be the same and when this fact was established it became the basis of all future projects.

For seven years the Stephenson Company had done little except measuring, analysing, comparing and surmising.

In 1853 we hear of a new man appearing on the

scene, in the person of Monsieur Ferdinand de Lesseps. This gentleman was born at Versailles, November 19th, 1805, and is consequently sixty-four years old. In 1828 he was appointed Consul at Lisbon, and in 1842 was transferred to Barcelona. In 1853, when on a visit to Mohammed Said Pacha, he proposed to him the plan of constructing a maritime canal across the isthmus which should run from sea to sea.

Said listened to him kindly and asked him to draw up a statement upon the features of his scheme and its advantages. In the early part of 1854 his celebrated memorial upon the Suez Canal was drawn up and delivered to the Viceroy under the title "Percement de l'Isthme de Suez: Exposé et Documents Officiels." From the character of the Egyptian Pachas, which was once proverbial, the world would not have been in the least surprised had the Viceroy contented himself with simply pocketing the document and returning for answer to Lesseps an invitation to smoke a pipe and take a cup of coffee. But Mohammed Said Pacha, who succeeded Abbas, his nephew, was an enlightened prince, and he loved to gather celebrated men around him. Koenig Bey, secretary of Said Pacha, was a German; Linant Bey, and Mougel Bey, Chief Engineers of Public Works, were Frenchmen; Galice Bey, who constructed the Alexandrian fortifications, and Monet Bey, Captain of Engineers, were also Frenchmen. Mohammed Said had been educated in Paris. He was well acquainted with Monsieur de Lesseps, and he confidently

entrusted him with the task of creating an ocean way from sea to sea.

The deed of concession for the construction of the ship canal was signed towards the end of November, 1854. A complete specification of the grant was drawn up and appeared at Cairo, March 25th, 1855. The two engineers, Linant and Mougel Bey, were the authors of the documents.

The grand question to be solved definitely before commencing the gigantic task was, "Is it possible to make an artificial Bosphorus without locks between the two seas?"

M. de Lesseps appealed to the best engineers of Europe for their decision. This was another of De Lesseps' great ideas—this appeal to a scientific assembly of Europe, to which the ablest engineers of the world were invited to attend. On the part of England attended Messrs. McClean, C. Manby, and Captain Hewitt, eminent engineers. Austria sent Chevalier de Negretti, Councillor of State, and Inspector-General of Railroads. From Piedmont went M. Paleocapa, Minister of Public Works at Turin; from Holland, M. Conrad, Chief Engineer of the Water Staat; from Prussia, M. Leutze, Director of the works on the Vistula; from Spain, Don Montesinos, Director of Public Works at Madrid; while France was represented by Rear-Admiral de Genouilly, Captain Jaures, member of the Board of Bridges and Highways, and M. Lieusson, Hydrographer and Engineer of the Navy.

This International Commission met for the first time at Paris, October 30th and 31st, 1855. It was decided that the Commission should depart from Marseilles the following week, 8th November. The Commission arrived at Alexandria on the 18th, and soon after commenced their duties.

The nature of the rocks and sands along the coast was closely investigated, as well as the laws of the currents and the internal navigation of the country. They paid close attention to previous facts; they verified such inquiries as had been instituted by commission, or independently made by travellers and scientific gentlemen; they investigated everything that concerned the isthmus, the soundings and borings in the desert, and the roadsteads of Suez and Pelusium. Native pilots were consulted at Suez, the quarries of Attaka close by were examined, and during their five days' stay at Suez they determined the precise location of the future harbour of Suez and the debouchure of the canal. During these proceedings several important facts came to light. It was proved that all charts of the Suez roadstead were totally incorrect.

The Suez roadstead was found to afford ample anchorage for 500 ships at once. The depth varied from sixteen to forty feet, and was bottomed with soft mud. The anchorage was entered into by two deep channels, sufficiently wide to allow vessels to tack. The north-north-west wind was found to blow almost uninterruptedly from March to November, which tallies exactly with the account of Herodotus, and

explains why Philadelphus built the city of Berenice so far from the sea-line. During the remaining three months the wind blows alternately from south-south-east and west-south-west. Finally it was ascertained that the roadstead of Suez had not perceptibly risen during centuries.

It was concluded that the harbour of Suez was eminently suitable, and that to obtain the necessary depth for the shipping there would only be required two piers, the southernmost to extend 5200 feet and the northern 3900 feet from the shore.

The journey of the Commission across the isthmus was also successful. Borings were occasionally made, and from the surface of the lowest depression the drill went down easily thirty feet. Near Shalouf and El Guisr there was some high ground to be pierced, and the highest would require to be excavated to the depth of thirty feet.

The Bitter Lakes they found to be an empty basin, extending twelve miles in length, from two to three miles in breadth, and with a depth of thirty feet below the level of the Red Sea at high tide. Lake Timsah they found to be a salt marsh in the very centre of the isthmus, covering an area of about two square miles, eighteen feet below the level of the Red Sea at high tide. The Bay of Pelusium, though shallow, was found to be all that had been reported of it. It was about forty miles in length by about thirty in width. At the distance of 2500 yards from the beach the water was found to be twenty-six feet in depth; at

the depth of 4000 yards there were thirty-five feet. The beach was but a narrow strip of sand, which during calm weather separated the lagoon of Menzaleh from the Mediterranean, but which in rough weather was swept by waves. The wind blew two-thirds of the year west-north-west. The littoral currents were unimportant, being irregular, running one time east, another west.

There was also nothing to be apprehended from the Nile mud which, at every inundation, the river left in the neighbourhood; for the soil was easily carried away by the waves, while the sand left as sediment was so small that even in a century there was no perceptible difference in the depth of the water in the Bay of Pelusium.

The examination of the Mediterranean coast was carried from Pelusium to Damietta, a small port used by fishermen and Delta traders. Along the whole coast the peculiarities of the beach perceivable at Pelusium were found more or less marked. Near Tanis a depth of twenty-six feet of water was found at the distance of a mile and a half from the beach, and afterwards there was a quicker decline into deep water. The beach at this place was nearly a mile wide and five or six miles in length, and rose something like fifteen feet above the level of the Mediterranean. It was composed of fine sand and Nile mud. Beyond it was the Lake of Menzaleh, an immense sheet of brackish water, which covered ancient cornfields of the Delta, once fertilised by the Tanitic

branch of the Nile debouching at Tanis. Embankments must have been neglected, and the ridge of sand separating it from the sea must have been cut through by enemies to cause such a loss of rich land to Egypt. It was stated that if this vast area was reclaimed it would pay the entire Khedive's debt if sold at a reasonable sum per acre.

The materials necessary for the construction of the port, which it was determined should be situate eighteen miles west of Pelusium, near Tanis, were easily procurable from the quarries on the Syrian coast, from the Isles of Cyprus and Rhodes. The channel to the port was to be 1300 feet wide, and running south-west and north-east. The port was to consist of the channel, 1300 feet wide, bounded by a north pier 9800 feet long, and a south pier 7000, and three harbours, each capable of mooring 190 ships. The north pier would stop at the depth of 32 feet, the south pier at 26 feet ; one was to be 32 feet wide at the top, the other was to be 20 feet. Both were to be raised 6 feet above the water and surmounted with a parapet.

The report forwarded to his Highness the Viceroy of Egypt contained more in detail of what is above related.

In the concluding article of their report, the International Commission decided that the ship canal across the Isthmus of Suez was a practicable undertaking ; that the two sea-ports, Suez and the port of Said, presented no more than ordinary difficulties ;

and, lastly, that the cost of the entire canal, deep enough for ocean vessels, broad enough for a world's commerce, could be constructed for £8,000,000.

Armed with this report, with the full sanction and powers of the Viceroy, nothing remained for M. Lesseps but to advertise the project, organise a company, and invite capitalists to take its stock.

In 1858 the "Compagnie Universelle Maritime de Suez" was formed, with M. Ferdinand de Lesseps for president. The capital of the company was 200,000,000 francs, or £8,000,000, in 400,000 shares of £20 each, of which four-fifths were to be paid up at once. Of these shares Mohammed Said took 177,642.

In the grant of the company the right of importing any goods free of duty to the isthmus was given them by the Viceroy, also such workmen as were necessary for the construction of the canal were to be supplied from the fellahs of Egypt, with a stipulation only that they should be maintained by the Canal Company. The firman of the Sultan was easily obtained, for since Egypt was tributary to him this was to be procured before work could be commenced. In April, 1859, the first spadeful was turned up and the work on the canal may be said to have commenced from that month.

In addition to the capital subscribed, the company received money from different sources.

In 1863 Said Pacha died, and Ismail, son of Ibrahim, son of Mehemet Ali, succeeded to the Vice-

royalty of Egypt. Ismail Pacha had been much in England, and, as is well known, England entertained great prejudices against the concession of the canal to her powerful neighbour, France.

The Sultan was besieged at Constantinople to rescind the concession. Ismail Pacha was requested to withdraw the fellah supplies. The Sultan wavered, but Napoleon had his eye upon him, and he was immediately frightened out of his intended course; Ismail Pacha had however a fund of obstinacy in him —he broke the contract with the Canal Company, and would furnish no more fellahs. Napoleon came to the rescue of De Lesseps and suggested a commission to decide upon an equitable compensation for breach of contract.

The committee, composed equally of Egyptians and Frenchmen, declared in favour of the company, and Napoleon, who was the umpire, awarded the company damages to the amount of £3,600,000 which was to be payable in instalments within fifteen years.

In order to aid their works on the great ship canal, the company constructed an auxiliary canal, running from Zagazig (ancient Bubastis) to Gasasin, a length of twenty-nine miles. Between Gasasin and Timsah there lay an immense depression in the desert, which, if irrigated, might easily be reclaimed. This depression was called Wady Toumilat, and like the rest of the desert, in the neighbourhood of Timsah, was but a portion of Goshen, one of the most fertile districts of old Egypt. Wady Toumilat became the property

of the company by purchase for the sum of £80,000. The estate consisted of 28,000 acres, and after being fenced round and irrigated, and sown with cotton seed, returned, on the third year, a revenue of £80,000. In 1864 the estate was sold to Ismail Pacha for £400,000. The auxiliary canal was continued from Timsah, which is now known as Ismailia, along the western edge of the basin of the Bitter Lakes, and approached the foot of the Geneffe Mountains, to the port of Suez, so as to permit the loaded barges and dredges to proceed to Suez roadstead.

A balance-sheet furnished by M. Lesseps the 6th of August, 1864, gives the following figures relative to the expenditure:—

Cost of piers, quays and other works at Port Said	$2,840,000
Excavations through El Guisr	2,100,000
Excavations of Ship Canal	22,440,000
Casing of parts of the canal with stone	1,600,000
Cost of piers at Suez	440,000
Laying down a line of fresh-water pipes between Ismailia and Port Said	580,000
Unforeseen and general expenses	2,000,000
Total expenditure	$32,000,000

Of this total the sums for which contracts have been signed between the company and various French firms amount to	$27,260,000
The remaining expenditure calculated upon estimate is	4,740,000
	$32,000,000

To this sum must be added the interest paid monthly to the shareholders on their paid-up capital. This item amounted then to $1,600,000, which was increased to $2,000,000 when the remaining fifth of the subscription was paid up.

The canal, however, has cost altogether, so far, £12,000,000.

The excavations of the canal were undertaken by the eminent French firm of Messrs. Borel, Lavallet & Co. Under their contract with the Canal Company the works were to be completed by the 30th June, 1868, under a penalty of $100,000 per month for every month's delay; on the other hand, they were to receive a like sum from the company for every month gained. It is almost needless to state that the French engineers did not fulfil their contract. Many vexatious causes, principally political, so retarded the work, that the Canal Company graciously consented to extend their time to the 1st November, 1869.

Preliminary to any excavations on the isthmus efficient arrangements had to be made for a plentiful supply of fresh water in the desert; for the tract of land which was to be the scene of continuous operations was but a treeless waste of saline marshes and sand.

During the initial stage of the work, water had to be conveyed long distances, on the backs of camels, horses, and donkeys, in leather mushoks and goat-skins, to keep a long line of iron tanks extending

across the isthmus always supplied ; also all provisions for the labourers, tools and every description of articles required for the works, had to be conveyed in the same manner at enormous expense. To accelerate and secure the transportation of these necessities, the Sweet Water Canal, already mentioned, was rapidly pushed forward to its completion, which took place in 1861. This canal was 93½ miles in length ; its width varied from 50 to 65 feet at the water-level, and the depth was about 6 feet The company had calculated upon raising a very considerable revenue from this canal, as by the original concessions from Said Pacha they were to become proprietors of all waste lands which they might be able to bring into cultivation, and had the right to levy navigation dues. But with the withdrawal of the supply of fellah labour they lost these valuable privileges, receiving as compensation the award in accordance with the French Emperor's arbitration.

The Sweet Water Canal, during the time the Maritime Canal was still in progress of construction, was a valuable medium of communication between the two seaports of Suez and Ismailia, and changed the aspect of the country in a wonderful manner. Wherever there lay any depression or hollow along the route the infiltration from its banks created quite a verdure, which was a striking proof of the facility with which much of the desert might be reclaimed.

An instance of the wonderfully fertilising power of

the Nile water over the desert sands is furnished near Serapeum. At a place called Bir Abou Ballah—the "Well of the Father of Dates"—near the spot where the fresh-water canal turns its course to the southward, the company put under cultivation a few acres of land, surrounding a house which was intended for the use of Abdel Kader, should that famous chieftain ever feel disposed to take up his residence on their domains. A few seeds and shrubs, planted in the sands only three or four years ago, have, by the sole aid of Nile water periodically supplied from the canal, transformed this bit of desert into green fields, shaded by palms and other trees, and a most charming little oasis now exists where but a short time ago only barren sands met the eyes. Ismailia, also situated on Lake Timsah, furnishes numerous proofs, in its gardens and enclosures, of the marvellous fertilising power of Nile water.

The most specious arguments have been urged against this canal by Englishmen, special engineers, officials of all classes, special correspondents and others, all of whom appear to have absorbed the prejudice of Palmerston. This is loyalty to their old premier, but it is not good sense.

According to them the Suez Canal was a failure and would for ever remain one unless English engineers took hold of it and English gold carried it through. Lesseps was besides an adventurer! So said unbelieving Englishmen.

Lesseps himself was a vagary as much as his

project was one. But this living vagarist, this adventurer, this long calumniated individual, De Lesseps, persevered against great disadvantages in the undertaking, until finally, on this blessed day of our Lord, the 17th of November, 1869, we see him with worthy pride exhibiting his mighty achievement to the civilised globe, as represented by an empress, an emperor, potentates, crown princes, dignitaries of all countries, monarchical and republican, representatives of despotic and democratic Governments. Without this quality of perseverance De Lesseps had been long ago numbered with those who are forgotten, but to-day he lives, to be hereafter an important unit among the illustrious great of the world.

The great undertaking will be described more in detail as the fleet moves down the canal.

Let it suffice to state just here that the maritime canal is about 120 miles in length from sea to sea. Out of this length only thirty-eight miles were above sea-level.

The remaining eighty-two miles were either below it or of the same level. The parts on the sea level were Lakes Menzaleh and Ballah, and those below it were Lake Timsah and the two basins of the Bitter Lakes. Lake Timsah, which occupies the centre of the isthmus, midway between the two seas, is about nine miles in circumference, and it is proposed to convert that basin into a central harbour, where vessels may at all times find a safe and convenient anchorage. Starting from the Mediterranean the

canal passes successively through the Lakes Menzaleh and Ballah, the lofty mounds of El Guisr, Lake Timsah, the district of Serapeum, the greater and lesser basins of the Bitter Lakes, and finally reaches the Red Sea at Suez. From the Mediterranean to El Guisr the width of the canal is 240 feet, and from El Guisr to Ismailia it is 180 feet, after which it expands again into its proper width of 240 feet.

Its depth in every part is to be twenty-six feet.

The expense of keeping the ship canal in good working order has been estimated at about £75,000. If this is true the canal will be a success without doubt. For proofs we have but to consider the following statistics. The charges on shipping as agreed upon for transit are ten francs per ton. This sum, though unnecessarily large, we are compelled to take as a basis for our estimates of the revenue of the canal.

The Peninsular and Oriental Company have two vessels arriving each week at Alexandria and Suez, and two departing. These must pass now through the canal.

We will say that the Indian steamer, instead of stopping at Suez, steams direct to Port Said, and perhaps continues her voyage to Southampton; the outward bound steamer, instead of stopping at Alexandria, steams directly through the canal to Suez and Bombay—one outward bound and the other homeward bound each week. Two vessels a week will make 104 vessels a year; these, averaging, 1000 tons

per vessel, will aggregate 104,000 tons. At ten francs or two dollars per ton, this tonnage will produce the sum of £41,600 a year. The vessels carry out and home about 10,000 passengers every year. This number of passengers must pay £4000; so that from the Peninsular and Oriental Company alone the company of the canal will receive £45,600 annually, exclusive of dues from the coal ships. The Messageries Impériales have ten steamships entering the ports of Suez and Alexandria and departing therefrom every month. Like figures put against these steamers will produce in a year the sum of £48,000; passengers, including 30,000 French troops, the sum of £12,000, which would make a total of £60,000. The Bombay and Bengal line have 104 steamers entering and departing the port of Suez in connection with Messrs. Moss & Co.'s line of steamers from Liverpool, and Marc Fraissinet's "Maritimes Marseilles," which with their tonnage and passengers must pay £45,600 annually. The British Government has forty-eight troop-ships entering and departing the port of Suez each year. These troop-ships are from 4000 to 5000 tons burden, while 20,000 troops cross from England to India and *vice versâ*. The British Government consequently will have to pay £49,600 per annum. 100,000 tons of coal annually conveyed through the canal by the companies' vessels, at the price of fifteen francs per ton, will produce £60,000.

Even from this brief estimate the receipts amount to a total of £185,000. As passengers pay now fifty

shillings each for crossing from Suez to Alexandria by rail, it is but natural to infer that they will prefer paying the small sum of eight shillings for a much easier and less fatiguing route. Those who have crossed the isthmus by rail dislike the fatigue and heat of the isthmus transit, and it is but natural to suppose that each line of steamers will avail itself of this quick and shortest route, avoiding all the expense of transhipment, and the unloading and reloading at the respective ports of Alexandria and Suez.

Any company who, from prejudice, will not hasten to avail themselves of the canal, will find themselves beaten by competing companies. The Messageries Impériales line will begin to use the canal immediately after the inauguration ceremony is concluded.

I have not touched upon the Turkish pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, which must furnish handsome revenues to the Canal Company, or how Spain will maintain her connection with the Philippine Islands, or how the Netherlands will choose to keep up intercourse with Java, or Portugal with Goa and East Africa, etc., etc.

Every consideration of economy, of time and money, leads us into the conclusion that a saving of 5000 to 8000 miles on the voyage from Europe to India must surely tell very materially on the calculations of mercantile men.

England, as possessing three-fourths of the commerce of the Indian seas and by far the largest mercantile marine of any of the nations of Europe,

will necessarily be the first to profit by the canal; while all other nations, especially those bordering the Mediterranean, will each, in a certain degree, participate in the advantages offered by it.

It must not be overlooked that steam is gradually but surely supplanting the use of sails, and experience every day shows that to steamers at least the navigation of the Red Sea offers no exceptional difficulties. The high cost of coal at Suez and Aden has, it is true, hitherto rendered steam navigation somewhat expensive in those parts, but the price of that valuable article will be much lower now that the sixty-nine francs, or $\$14\frac{1}{2}$, per ton which it cost to transport it across the isthmus by rail, has been reduced to three dollars per ton by water. Besides, for clippers carrying valuable freights of tea, silk, opium and cotton, a small auxiliary screw would be of immense advantage. Down the Red Sea no vessel would require more than her sails, for the winds blow strong and steady in that direction for nine months out of the year.

The advantages accruing to Egypt from this Suez Canal are also incalculable, and great changes must naturally take place throughout the country. Brilliant results must follow here when civilisation's mighty and plenipotent current flows by portals so long closed by semi-barbarism.

In November, 1862, Lake Timsah was filled with the waters of the Red Sea in presence of M. de Lesseps, accompanied by the Ulemas of Cairo, the Catholic Bishop of Alexandria, *employés* of the

company, and a numerous party of friends. On the western bank stood M. de Lesseps, who, as the lock was raised, said, "In the name of his Highness, Said Pacha, I command that the waters of the Mediterranean be let into Lake Timsah by the grace of God." The dike being removed the waters rushed into the lake. The Ulemas then proceeded to bless the waters, and a Te Deum was chanted at the French Chapel of El Guisr.

The canal was expected to be finished by October, 1868, but the circumstances which prevented it have been so fully explained that it is unnecessary to enter into any further details about them.

In February of this year the Bitter Lakes were filled, and the same ceremonies which marked the filling of the Lake Timsah were rehearsed upon this occasion in presence of the Viceroy of Egypt, the Prince of Wales and his suite.

In the early part of this summer M. de Lesseps, after consultation with his engineers and contractors, published his notices to the effect that the Suez Canal would be open to the commerce of all nations on the 1st day of October, 1869. This date was, however, altered, and the event postponed to the 17th of November, 1869, because of the great heat of the Egyptian autumn and because the contractors desired further postponement.

The whole civilised world was made acquainted with the great event, which was to be celebrated with all the pomp and circumstance due to such an

occasion. The potentates of Europe, crown princes, and their suites, chambers of commerce, representatives of the press of both Europe and America, consuls, engineers, scientific and literary commissions, representatives of whatever body corporate in all Europe, which would give grace and dignity to the important ceremony of inauguration, were invited to be present at the opening of the canal to universal commerce.

To this invitation the Empress of the French, the Emperor of Austria, the Crown Prince of Prussia, the Crown Prince and Princess Henry of the Netherlands, a Belgian prince, the Crown Prince of Italy, ambassadors and heads of literary and scientific societies cordially responded. The potentates and dignitaries of the civilised world were willing to do honour to the great occasion.

It is interesting to note the manner in which De Lesseps' communication was received by the nations. England seemed considerably humiliated that the canal had advanced to completion in spite of the predictions of her best engineers and her Palmerstonian oracles. The representatives of London awoke and made preparations to accompany those of other great cities, to witness for themselves the success which they had so long professed to doubt.

Liverpool was no longer indifferent; Glasgow, Hull, and Southampton were suddenly impressed with the idea that the Suez Canal, being so long a forbidden subject, had, unknown to them, awakened the world,

and these cities responded by promising to send their delegates to the ceremony. Enterprises were started by the dozen; new lines of steamers were to run from Europe to India and the extreme Orient. Russia established in Port Said an agency for steam lines of navigation between Odessa and India. The powerful Austrian Lloyds also established an agency at Port Said in view of the extended commerce before them. The Italian Government recommended to Italian companies that they should utilise the Egyptian Bosphorus. Spain prepared for a steam navigation between Barcelona and her colonies in the Philippine Isles. The Marseilles Company of Maritime Transports commenced the construction of steamers of great capacity. These ships, propelled by engines that required but little consumption of coal, were advertised to carry passengers at reduced prices between Marseilles and the great Asiatic cities.

The Viceroy prepared to do honour to his guests in a most extraordinary manner. An opera house, a theatre and a circus were constructed in the Egyptian capital; gas was introduced into Cairo, the city of the Mameluke caliphs; Esbekiyeh plaza was renovated in a manner that ten years ago would not have been believed possible. Fountains were made to shoot up tall columns of water; kiosks gaily painted with Oriental taste sprang up close to the fountains; rare plants and shrubs decked the hitherto waste and refuse heaps of Cairo. A magnificent railing enclosed this blooming garden, and the entrances to it were in

a style that would not have disgraced the imperial gardens of Europe. The main streets of Cairo were laid out, flanked by granite and freestone kerbstones, and sidewalks were laid with massive flagstones. The railway station was renovated, and the road leading from it to the heart of the city was improved in such a manner that on their first introduction into Cairo nothing might be seen to shock the delicacy of the Viceroy's guests.

The Viceroy's palaces were repainted, and re-furnished with the best possible taste. The Viceroy had also made preparations to feed and house his guests in the best style. Every hotel in Cairo was engaged to board and lodge the guests, to furnish them with champagnes and other wines at forty-eight shillings per diem per capita.

Neither were the guests to travel the streets of Cairo afoot ; all the cabs and carriages were hired for their use. This was liberality which may be called extravagant, and for mere curiosity, let us reckon up and see how much money this will cost the Viceroy. There are three thousand guests invited, who, we may rest assured, are mostly all here by this time. Allowing one month's stay to each guest, we shall find that three thousand guests at forty-eight shillings per diem, will cost the Viceroy the round sum of £216,000. The cost of entertaining the Royalties and the naval officers will also amount to a large sum. The preparations for their reception, the oil for illuminations, the fireworks, the *fêtes* and the numerous

expenses which such an occasion requires, will be expensive, so that we are moderate in affixing the cost of the entertainments at £400,000.

One's next thought is naturally, "Who is to pay for all this?" Alas! the answer is too evident for those who have been to Egypt. The poor over-tasked fellahs, who from time immemorial have contributed to the extravagant luxuries of their rulers, must pay.

Up to the night of the 14th inst. no doubt existed that large steam vessels would be able to traverse the canal from one end to the other. The narrowest and shallowest portion of the passage was near El Guisr, on the northern side of Ismailia. At that point, however, the depth was not less than seven metres, or about twenty-two feet, and the breadth sixty metres. The remainder of the canal was positively stated to be of uniform depth of at least twenty-six feet. Along the whole length, on both sides, stakes with small flags had been fixed to facilitate the navigation.

Two light-houses had been erected on the Bitter Lakes, and an electric light of great power was installed at Port Said.

Various rumours were current in Cairo concerning the canal and its prospects, especially among the English guests.

The correspondent of the *Morning Post* of London declared to an admiring crowd of fellow journalists that a landslip had occurred near El Guisr, which

had almost filled the canal. Another press gentleman said that a rock had been found near Chalouf El Terraba, in the very centre of the canal, which had occasioned great anxiety to M. de Lesseps. Finally, the most sensational of all rumours was that De Lesseps had blown out his brains.

Up to the 14th, a list of 120 vessels (some of them very large tonnage) which were to pass through the canal, to and from Ismailia, had been made out. Among those were two of the Messageries Imperiale's fine Indian steam packets, which were waiting at Suez, and were to return to Marseilles to be relieved by others.

So far as could be gathered, the programme of the inauguration was as follows :—

On the 16th the benediction would be pronounced by the Predicate of the Tuileries, Rev. Father Bauer, Confessor to the Empress, the Bishop of Alexandria pronouncing it in Arabic. On the following morning, 17th, at 8 o'clock, the procession would begin moving, headed by the *Aigle*, the yacht of the Empress of the French, and the other vessels would follow at intervals of five minutes, so as to arrive the same afternoon at Ismailia, where a grand dinner, ball, and illuminations would take place. On the following morning, the 18th, the procession of vessels would resume their course for Suez, where, on its arrival the same evening, there would be other festivities after a salute of 101 guns. The order of return was not decided, as it was expected that some of the royal personages would

proceed by rail to Cairo. It was also said that the Khedive would assemble thousands of workmen, who would line the shores of the canal and "hurrah" during the passing of the procession.

On the 14th, the *Europe*, on which I had found an excellent berth, left Alexandria, in company with the Viceroy's steamer, the *Fayoum*, both bound for Port Said. The *Europe* was a strong new steamer of 3000 tons burden, the second of a line of steamers which Marc Fraissinet and Sons were constructing to run from Marseilles to Port Said and Suez. A heavy gale was blowing, and the bar at Alexandria was most dangerous, as there are only twenty-seven feet of water over the reefs. Everybody on board was in the greatest suspense while crossing, but luckily, excepting a few very heavy shakes, we experienced no harm. On board the *Fayoum* great preparations had been made for a banquet that evening, and while crossing, the huge waves almost turned her completely over, and, though the vessel was not damaged, the banquet was abandoned.

Damietta was sighted at ten the following morning, and an hour afterwards the masts of an immense fleet which was gathered at Port Said were seen. At noon we passed the English fleet, consisting of the following vessels: *Bellerophon*, 4270 tons; *Caledonia* 4125 tons; *Lord Warden*, 4080 tons, carrying the flag of Vice-Admiral Milne, K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean squadron; *Prince Consort*, 4045

tons; *Royal Oak*, 4056 tons; and the wooden ships *Newport*, surveying vessel; *Psyche*, despatch boat, carrying Mr. Elliott, the English Ambassador at Constantinople; the *Rapid*, steam sloop, 672 tons.

On account of their great draught the ironclads found it impossible to enter even the roadstead of Port Said, and were consequently obliged to lie at anchor three miles off the port.

The *Europe*, closely followed by the *Fayoum*, steamed towards Port Said, entered the fine capacious roadstead, and anchored alongside of the outer quay amidst the assembled fleets, which were dressed in their bunting.

CHAPTER III.

The Maritime Capital of the Suez Isthmus—Its Workshops and Concrete Block Manufactory—The Harbour, Quays and Piers—The Naval and Mercantile Fleets—Arrival of Royalties—The Ceremony of Blessing the Canal—The Illuminations.

ISMAILIA, *November 18th*, 1869.

PORT SAID, the maritime capital of the isthmus, is entirely the creation of the Suez Canal Company; for not a vestige of a dwelling existed within miles of the spot when M. de Lesseps and his few adventurous companions first pitched their tent upon the sandy beach. On the narrow strip of land dividing the lake of Menzaleh from the Mediterranean, in the centre of

a region of lagoons, amid bare patches of moist sand, frequented by pelicans, sportive fish and fishermen, sprang up the thriving city of Port Said. It counts already 20,000 inhabitants ; but who shall say what the population will be fifty years hence? There are people who say that Port Said will never become a great city, because there is no land to support it, or to invite strangers to live near it ; but if the land now covered by the lagoon of Menzaleh is ever reclaimed, there will be land enough.

At Port Said the great workshops of the company are established. All the steam machinery, foundries, forges, etc., are stationed on the left of the harbour, while the city proper occupies the right of the harbour. Here also are seen the dredges, the barges and lighters, and other material required for the excavations along the isthmus.

All the machinery and ironwork were brought in pieces from France, and were here put together in the workshops. The workshops and wharves cover an area of twenty acres.

The attention of visitors is always drawn to the concrete block manufactory on the company's side of the harbour. These large blocks were made out of lime, sand, and water, by Messrs. Dussaud, for the construction of the jetties necessary for the protection of the harbour. After they were dried in the sun—the heat of which is very powerful in the summer on the beach—the blocks, which measured ten feet long, six in width, and four in depth, were dropped into the

sea, and have proved capable of resisting the action of the waves as well as the hardest stone. The company contracted with Messrs. Dussaud for 250,000 cubic metres of these blocks. The two jetties, 1300 feet apart, form an excellent roadstead. The entrance to it is only about 300 feet wide. A lighthouse is to be erected at the end of each jetty, and when the jetties are completed, it is expected that they will form admirable promenades in calm weather. It may be stated as a proof of the safety of the anchorage that since the foundation of Port Said in 1859, the total losses of vessels in the roadstead during the ten years have been only fifteen out of 5000 which have entered and departed from the port.

There is an extensive quay, rendered firm by asphalte, with strong granite mooring columns, which lead from the embouchure of the canal away through the city, and along the southernmost jetty to about half its length. Close to this vessels may moor in perfect safety in thirty feet of water. The port itself is divided into three basins, each capable of containing nearly two hundred vessels of large size. From the end of the piers which separate the basins to the extremity of the port there is a length of 1000 feet, along which may be moored about one hundred other vessels. The harbour of Port Said is 500 acres in extent, and it is reported that 500 vessels may easily find room within it. But when the northern and southern jetties are finished with a lighthouse at each end, and broad promenades running along the top,

there will be room to berth 1000 merchant ships. At present, however, the concrete blocks are merely piled loosely one upon another to the height of ten feet above the water, whose restless waves beat against them unceasingly.

The town of Port Said, I have said, contains 20,000 inhabitants, who are mostly engaged in keeping small shops and hotels. The hotels are numerous, for I counted twenty during my tour through the sandy streets. They are principally named after the great Parisian hotels.

The Hotel du Louvre stands on the site of the Hotel d'Angleterre, where I stopped last year, and charges twenty dollars per day for board and lodging. The Hotel Fontane charged twelve dollars per diem and the cheapest price was eight dollars a day. There is one square called Place de Lesseps, and another which is called Place Ismail Pacha.

The city has two spacious sandy boulevards. Fronting the sea beach are a row of Gothic cottages temporarily fitted up for restaurants and hotels, all of which were occupied and doing what one may call an excellent business.

At present there are twenty streets, but for any extension required the city must extend itself along the beach, for on one side of this strip of sand is Lake Menzaleh; on the other the Mediterranean Sea. There are also two casinos with the amusements usually found in semi-Oriental towns. Such is Port Said and its harbour.

It was this city and harbour that on the morning of the 15th of November I saw decked out in bunting, from the housetops to the ground, aloft and below, with vari-coloured streamers and the flags of all nations. The whole scene reminded one somewhat of a Chinese play enacted on the stage, for the Chinese lanterns were countless, and strung on lines of wire as far as the eye could see.

There were three hundred vessels of all nations in port, mostly men-of-war and passenger steamers. England, France, Italy, Spain, Holland, Russia, Austria, Prussia, Turkey, Egypt, Greece, were represented by fleets of ironclads, frigates, corvettes, sloops, steam-yachts, and great packet steamers.

The Emperor of Austria was in port, on board an Austrian frigate; the Prince and Princess Henry of the Netherlands were on board the royal Netherlands steam-yacht *De Valk;* the Viceroy of Egypt was on board his yacht the *Maharousse;* the English Ambassador was on board the British sloop of war the *Psyche;* General Ignatieff, the Russian Ambassador, was on board a Russian frigate; the Greek Ambassador was on board a Greek frigate; the Italian Ambassador was on board a war-vessel of Italy. Their presence in Port Said explained why the cannon thundered their salutes the whole day, for from sunrise to sunset the roar of cannon was incessant. One time it was a regular discharge, for the number of war-vessels was so great, and so many countries were represented, that if one ship fired, the ships of ten

other countries would have to follow. On the evening of the 15th, the Viceroy sent round to all the steamers in the harbour to invite all first-class passengers on board his yacht, the *Maharousse*, to a ball and supper.

Over one thousand ladies and gentlemen availed themselves of the invitation. The ball lasted until two o'clock in the morning.

Early on the morning of the 16th, the visitors to the Suez Canal were awakened by thundering salutes, which commenced at sunrise. This time it was the Crown Prince of Prussia, who had just come in on the Prussian frigate *Arcona*, of thirty-two guns, with Prince Louis of Hesse and two or three other German princes. The salutes to His Highness the Crown Prince lasted until seven o'clock; then it was signalled that the Empress Eugenie had entered the roadstead on the French yacht *Aigle*. The French frigate *Themis* announced her arrival with a salute which was fired with excellent time and order, each cannon being fired close on the other to the last. The Emperor of Austria's yacht took the salute up, after which it was continued by the *Arcona*, then the Netherlands frigate, and so on round the entire fleet.

The Empress appeared most lovely as she stood in light morning costume on the hurricane deck of the yacht. Her dress, so far as I could make it out from the *Europe*, was of blue silk, with a white cape thrown over her shoulders, while on her head she wore a

sailor's cap, jauntily set off with a blue veil. The shipping appeared crowded with passengers, who shouted out enthusiastically, "Vive l'Imperatrice!" to which she made graceful acknowledgments.

Italian, French, English, Spanish, Turkish or Egyptian steamers kept coming in continually throughout the morning, and as there were many eminent personages on board, the din of cannon salutes was something tremendous.

At two o'clock the invited guests left their steamer to go ashore to the ceremony of blessing the canal.

Situated on the sandy beach at the distance of half a mile from the canal, but a few paces from the sounding surf of the Mediterranean, were three pavilions, erected and decorated to the utmost of Egyptian taste. One, surmounted with a cross, was for the performance of the benediction in Greek and French; the second, surmounted by the crescent, was for the Ulemas and Mussulman priests; the third and the largest was for the Viceroy and his guests. A plank road led from the pavilions to the quay in the harbour, along which the invited guests came crowding between two and three o'clock.

There were so many uninvited among these that the unfortunate Arab guards, never having seen so many well-dressed Europeans before, were completely nonplussed as to what they should do, and in their efforts at discrimination blundered, as a matter of course, most ridiculously. The Ulemas took their

seats within the Mussulman pavilion, in company with the Imaum, at a quarter before three. About the same time, the Greek Bishop of Alexandria, followed by twenty-four Greek priests, occupied their pavilion.

After a lapse of fifteen minutes, a general discharge from the fleet announced that their Majesties were *en route* from the quay, and in a few minutes a screaming chorus from Egyptian bugles informed the thousands of European and Egyptian spectators that the Royalties, for whom the ceremony waited, were present. Two dozen children, clothed in white, wearing chaplets of flowers on their heads, and holding bouquets in their hands, flanked the stairs up which their Majesties ascended.

Among the notables present were the Empress Eugenie, the Emperor of Austria, the Crown Prince of Prussia, the Viceroy of Egypt, the Prince and Princess Henry of the Netherlands, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, Right Hon. H. Elliott, and the Russian Ambassador at the same Court, General Ignatieff. These occupied the front row of chairs, looking towards the other pavilions. Behind them were Abd el Kader, the Algerian chieftain, with his whiskers dyed to a jet black, and dressed in flowing white garments and turban, looking as indomitable as ever; M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, active-looking as a young man of thirty, though his hair and moustache were of snowy whiteness; Madame Charles Lesseps; the young Duchess of Alba, Mademoiselle Marion,

Madame de Souci, who is an authority about Oriental matters; and behind these again were a number of ambassadors and diplomats, such as Baron Prokch, Count Andrassy, Count de Beust, generals and admirals, commodores and captains, lieutenants, young middies and grave-looking Messieurs, Herrs, Señores, and gentlemen. Whoever was great and grand, whoever had a title, whoever was of distinction, in any service, whether army, navy, diplomatic, or consular; whoever had acquired distinction in his profession, whether in the arts, sciences, or literature; whoever was a member of a Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, society, or club; whoever had ever had anything to do with the canal; whoever was a correspondent of a newspaper of any notoriety—all these and many more were to be found here.

The Viceroy motioned to the Imaum to proceed. The Imaum read in Arabic, from a written paper, a few minutes, and his part of the ceremony was over. The Greek priests raised the Te Deum; Abbé Bauer, confessor to Her Majesty, delivered an address in French, glowingly eulogistic of the Viceroy, the Empress, M. de Lesseps, and the Emperor of Austria. The words were eloquent, and the theme was grand—the blue sky, to which he appealed, the solemn murmur of the surf, the magnificent fleet beyond, the hive of industry in front of him, called forth the Abbé's best powers, and his august audience responded sympathetically. With cheers for De Lesseps the ceremony concluded. The Suez Canal

had been consecrated to the commerce of the world.

At night Port Said was illuminated from end to end. The men-of-war were brilliantly illuminated with thousands of Chinese lights and Egyptian lanterns. The splendid *Maharousse*, the Viceroy's yacht, was all aglow with lighted fantasies. Later in the evening 1000 rockets were fired simultaneously, and scores of fiery pictures swarmed in the quiet still air, to the intense admiration of both foreigners and natives; wherein crowns and crescents intermingled, myriads of bouquets sparkled, golden showers fell, pyramids of fire and lustrous obelisks sprang up high, but the thousand and one things with which our senses were delighted by the Viceroy it is impossible to enumerate.

CHAPTER IV.

The Greatest Drama in Egyptian History—The Empress's Yacht Starts—List of Vessels in the Procession—The Canal, Scenes on the Banks—The Land and its Associations—Arrival at Lake Timsah.

ISMAILIA, *November 18th*, 1869.

THE morning of the 17th of November, the great day which was to see a new route to commerce opened, was ushered in with all the splendour of an Egyptian sun, amid deafening cannon salvoes and cheers

uttered by over 4000 sailors. A morning which ushered in the greatest drama ever witnessed or enacted in Egypt is not likely to be soon forgotten. It is the greatest and last, so far, of all the magnificent periods which Egypt has witnessed. One by one the mind glances rapidly by the outlines of its history, from the mythical time of Osiris, through the ages of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies, Cæsars and Caliphs, to this year of our Lord, 1869, as the eye catches sight of the stately fleets of Europe, assembled in the harbour of Port Said to inaugurate the canal which is a success won against nature and mankind, shifting quicksands and machinations of adverse governments, and in spite of omens and dark predictions.

For some reason the first vessel did not depart at the hour fixed, but at eight o'clock the Imperial French yacht was seen to obtrude her bowsprit from the line of ships at anchor, and gracefully swing round with her head pointed up the canal.

Within ten minutes volumes of white steam shot upward from her funnel, a salute was fired from the French frigate *Themis*, and the beautiful *Aigle* was seen shooting boldly up the canal, displaying below and aloft as much bunting as could be carried. Next the Emperor of Austria's steam yacht followed close to the *Aigle's* stern. A salute greeted the Emperor also as he passed by, the yards of the fleet were manned, and cheers were given by the entire crew.

The following is the order in which the steamers formed the splendid procession :—

No.	Name.	Tons.		Deepest draught. ft.	in.
1.	*Aigle.*	800.	Carrying the Empress Eugenie and suite . .	14	0
2.	Steam Yacht.	700.	Carrying Emperor of Austria and suite . . .	13	6
3.	„	700.	Carrying the Archduke of Austria	12	0
4.	*Gargnano.*	700.	Carrying a German Prince .	12	6
5.	Steam Yacht.	525.	Carrying the Crown Prince of Prussia and suite .	9	0
6.	„	670.	Royal Flag of Prussia at the Main, with Prince Louis of Hesse on board .	7	6
7.	*De Valk.*	650.	Prince and Princess Henry of the Netherlands . .	14	0
8.	*Psyche.*	725.	British Ambassador, Mr. Elliott, and Admiral Sir Alexander Milne on board	10	0
9.	*Orontes.*	1000.	Russian Ambassador, Gen. Ignatieff. . . .	16	0
10.	*Rapid.*	700.	Her Britannic Majesty's Sloop	12	0
11.	*Newport.*	700.	Her Britannic Majesty's Sloop	13	0
12.	*Dido.*	650.	Her Britannic Majesty's Sloop	12	0
13.	*Actif.*	700.	French Corvette . .	13	0
14.	*Forbin*	800.	„ „ . .	13	0
15.	*Latif*	2500.	Egyptian Frigate . .	12	6
16.	*Vulcan*	1000.	Austrian Lloyd's Company .	14	9
17.	*Pluto.*	1200.	„ „ „ .	15	0
18.	*Pelouse.*	2000.	Messageries Imperiales .	15	0
19.	*Thabor.*	1500.	„ „ .	15	0
20.	*Hawk.*	900.	Alexandria and Malta Telegraph Company . .	13	0
21.	*Europe.*	2500.	Marc Fraissinet and fils, Marseilles . . .	15	6

No.	Name.	Tons.		Deepest draught. ft.	in.
22.	*Lynx.*	500.	Despatch boat . . .	12	6
23.	*America.*	1500.	Austrian Lloyd's Company .	15	0
24.	Russian Steamer.		Odessa and Alexandria Russian Company . .	14	6
25.	Russian Steamer.		Odessa and Alexandria Russian Company . .	13	0
26.	*Principe Oddone.*	1200.	Brindisi line of Steamers .	14	0
27.	*Principe Tomaso.*	1000.	„ „ „ .	14	6
28.	*Sicilia.*	900.	„ „ „ .	14	0
29.	*Italia.*	900.	„ „ „ .	14	0
30.	*Scylla.*	1000.	Trieste line of Steamers .	14	0
31.	*Godavery.*	1800.	Messageries Imperiales .	15	6
32.	*Delta.*	2500.	Peninsula and Oriental .	16	0
33.	*El Masr.*	2000.	Egyptian Government .	14	6
34.	*Fayoum.*	1500.	„ „ .	14	0
35.	Turkish Steamer.	1500.	Ottoman Empire . .	14	6
36.	Turkish Steamer.	1500.	„ „ . .	15	0
37.	Turkish Steamer	1000.	„ „ . .	14	0
38.	Steam Yacht.		Private, British.		
39.	„		„ „		
40.	„		„ Swedish.		
41.	„		„ Norwegian.		
42.	„		„ Austrian.		

Following these came the Cambria sailing yacht and another (Swedish) yacht and several tugs of large burthen belonging to the Suez Maritime Canal Company.

Excepting a little confusion in the harbour, where steamers were lying thickest, three abreast in some places, there was not the slightest difficulty ex-

perienced. But so numerous were the vessels in the harbour, and yet so little noise and bluster comparatively were made, that very many people actually doubted whether we would start this day; nay, there were heavy bets laid that we should not reach Ismailia that night, nor even the next day.

Precisely at noon the steamer *Europe*, the twenty-first in the line, glides from the harbour between two tall obelisks of wood, which temporarily indicate the entrance of the canal. Once fairly in it the great ship canal of the Suez Isthmus is seen stretching away till lost in the horizon, separating Asia from Africa. On our left as we head towards Suez, is the desert bathed in vapour, to our right the lagoon of Menzaleh streaked with darkish lines of sand, and spreading as far as the eye can reach, dotted over with islands and numerous dahabiehs, whose lateen sails, faintly quivering, seem to us like swallows preparing to wing their way afar.

It is strange how quickly the influence of the shimmering mirage floating above the land, and the light desert and the blue lagoon, steals over the senses, and plunges us into day-dreaming.

Ras-el-Ech stands at the fourteenth kilometre from Port Said. As far as this point all went well. The lengthy procession kept admirable order, never swerving an inch to the right or the left seemingly. It looked like a grand march of civilisation, with crowned heads leading the way through a desert shrouded by vapour. The canal, 246 feet wide, gives

ample space to the largest ships, and depth sufficient to float with seventeen feet of water; and great steamers of 3000 tons burden plough through the canal as if this creation of De Lesseps and they were well acquainted with each other. The banks are solid enough, with slopes one foot in six, which promises security to the banks. The telegraph runs along the bank, and small stations and reservoirs for Nile water mark every tenth kilometre.

Kantara is situated at the forty-second kilometre, which is reached at 5.30 P.M. Five hours and a half to steam forty-two kilometres is slow work, but our boat the *Europe* has been unfortunate, for on account of her extreme length and the slow rate of progress, it has been difficult to steer her. She has been bumped from side to side several times, but she glided off easily enough owing to the slope of the banks. Bets rose to a high figure on board that we could not reach Ismailia this night, but confidence was restored as we continued to glide along with a straight broad avenue of water in front. Not one of the twenty vessels ahead of us had as yet come to grief.

Kantara is a village now, called into more active existence and importance by the canal which flows by it.

It is situated about twenty miles from Ismailia, and stands on the site of an ancient city. Kantara is on the highway of the caravans journeying between Syria and Egypt, and before the canal was opened a day seldom passed without the arrival of numerous

herds of cattle and long strings of camels bearing Egyptian and Syrian travellers. The village is amply supplied with excellent water, led thither in pipes from Ismailia, and the caravans rejoiced at the opportunity of replenishing their mushoks before proceeding on their journey. These water pipes follow the maritime canal to its junction with the Mediterranean, forty-eight miles from Ismailia, and supply all the stations along its course.

This is the only good water to be found on the isthmus, as the wells, although supplied by infiltrations from the Nile, are more or less brackish. As a precaution against accidents, such as might happen by the bursting of a pipe, or from any cause, the company have very prudently formed large reservoirs of water at Port Said, sufficient for fifteen days' consumption; but in order to render the supplies along the canal more secure, there is a second line of pipes running parallel a few feet distant from the first.

Fifteen miles to the west of Kantara, is Zoan, the place of departure, or the Tanis of the Greeks mentioned in Holy Writ for the deeds done in the "fields of Zoan."

Lake Menzaleh covers the fields of Zoan; the city itself is in ruins. We may judge of its importance in ancient times by the manner in which the prophets of Ezekiel and Isaiah speak of it. "The princes of Zoan are fools." "The counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish." Zoan was built seven years after Hebron. The ruins are most

interesting. A temple, a gateway of granite, columns, broken obelisks and statues exist at Zau, as it is called to-day, and the names of the great Rameses, with his cartouche, is cut upon a great many of the statues ; and these are all that is left of the joyous city whose antiquity is of ancient days.

The great ship canal cuts across the "way of the land of the Philistines, that runs from Gaza to Zoan," the place of departure. It is needless to enumerate the celebrities that travelled the way from Zoan through the Kenite land to Philistia. All the kings of Egypt who had designs against Palestine marched this way, and the cruel lord, even Cambyses, invaded Egypt by the same road. "Baldness is come upon Gaza, and Zoan lies in ruins." Between these two cities not a single habitation is seen to-day. The Arab pitches his tent by night, and in the morning he is gone, and soon the sands are whisked about by desert winds, and all traces of the camp fire and the sandalled footstep are swept away.

Fifteen miles to the east of Kantara, almost buried, lies Pelusium, once potent in wealth and great in commerce, proud of its palaces and merchant princes, but "the mart of nations" is no more. Its strongholds are a heap of ruins, its palaces have become the nests of reptiles, the river that gave it a harvest has wandered away, and the harbour which floated great Pelusium's fleets is a mound of sand. Damascus was a trader at its gates ; Tyre and Sidon exported their purple and fine linen ; the princely chiefs of Arabia

and the sons of Kedar brought to its markets the best of their flocks, of their camels and dromedaries; Meroe and the far countries of Ethiopia brought to it their gold dust and precious stones. The ships of Pelusium were made out of the oaks of Bashan, the cedars of Lebanon furnished masts. Its inhabitants were skilful in war; they built mounds and strong forts; they fenced their cities round about with thick walls. Its fine linen manufactories supplied the Phœnicians with the work of their looms. The country round about Pelusium was famous for producing lentils and all kinds of grain. The pastures by the river teemed with fat cattle, and the trees on its banks grew so thickly that the rays of the sun could not penetrate the foliage.

Anthylla, on the Canopus, maintained the queens of Egypt in shoes and fine girdles. Naucratis, a few miles west of here, received the tributes of the nations, and in its commerce it rivalled Pelusium.

Archandros, with its cunning workmen, excelled in broidered work, and sent to the fairs ear-rings of coral, necklaces of agate and tabrets of gold and silver; and the "Fair Fields of Zoan," instead of being an immense lagoon, once boasted of forests of strong, tall oaks, of groves of arbutus, wide-spreading acanthus, lime trees and poplars; beech, for wooden utensils, and virgin laurel to crown the victors at the game. Hazel, ash, firs with dense, dark green tops, myrtle for stout spear shafts, yews for Egyptian bows, while the umbrageous plane tree, the acacia with its

precious gum, evergreen box, and slender tamariska grew here in abundance. The watery lotus sprang from the rich Nile mud, palms upreared their heads, and dates hung in clusters from their tops ; vines, the orange, pines which furnished tall masts for ships, and torches for the darkness, and made such glowing fires to the gods ; all these and much more with flax crops, vetches, bitter lupins, and beans did the fertile fields of Zoan produce. There is nothing now left of all this fertility. The lagoon of Menzaleh shrouds all in its bosom. Nothing is to be seen of all the cities, or their labours, which the Delta of Egypt boasted.

East of Kantara the lake swims in mirage ; west and south the desert broods under clouds of vapour. At the fifty-sixth kilometre the sun is seen going down in a perfect blaze of glory ; the western fringe of the sky seems dyed in crimson. Perfect stillness reigns over the desert ; not a man nor any living thing is abroad, save the stately ships moving tranquilly through the canal. The moonlight succeeds to daylight, and if ever desert looked weird, it looked this night all clothed in amber colour. The moon cast long shadows of the ships' masts and monstrous images of steamers against the banks. The evening stars looked forth, and soon the heavens were decked in such splendour as may only be seen in this clear atmosphere. The moon being full, there was nothing to prevent the passage of the ships by night, and we continued on our way. At the fifty-eighth kilometre,

near the Ballah Lakes, we found the Egyptian frigate *Latif*, commanded by an English captain, ashore.

At the sixty-seventh kilometer we came to the heights of El Guisr, where the canal was but 180 feet wide, but 19 feet deep. This place was reached precisely at 9 P.M. Here the canal looked perfect, for it was a magnificent piece of engineering. New machines had to be built adapted for this work. Rocks had to be cut through, and great mounds of sand had to be removed for two miles. In some places the cutting is 150 feet deep.

At the commencement twenty thousand men were engaged on these works, but when the magnificent dredgers of Lavallet came into play it was not necessary to employ more than two or three hundred. The bluffs on both sides are high and steep, and being composed of sand, soil and gravel, they form admirable embankments. The village of El Guisr, which has a population of about one thousand people of all nationalities, boasts a well-built church and an extremely pretty garden, where all sorts of Egyptian flowers appear to thrive well.

The village is reached from the canal by a long flight of wooden steps, and the traveller on landing is agreeably surprised at its appearance. It looked gay even in the moonlight; for, like all the villages on the canal, it was covered with streamers and pennons. It being late when we arrived at this place, and as we were but a few miles from Ismailia, the *Europe* anchored in the middle of the canal, having arrived so

far without any accident. Not one of the fleet had experienced any difficulty in its passage through the canal, except the *Latif*, which went aground.

The 18th November.—The steamers ahead of the *Europe* reached the port of Ismailia late the previous evening. The Empress of the French and Emperor of Austria arrived at 5 P.M. and were enthusiastically received by the authorities.

The steamer *Europe* got under way at exactly 6 A.M. and recommenced her journey through the canal, followed by the thirty and more steamers behind.

Again floating down the artificial river of blue water our senses gradually succumbed to the influence of the azure sky, the yellow cliffs, and vaporous mirage. When a single palm tree's tops is seen through the vista a ravine affords, an ejaculation forced by wonder greets it, and all eyes are turned thither, when lo! the palm vanishes, and round a ridge to the south is seen a town in the very centre of the desert, fenced apparently with the same palms of which that shadow of a branch was a member. This town was Ismailia, the central port of the great canal.

Ismailia was animated, and its inland harbour presented the appearance of an unusually busy port. Every place whereon a flag or streamer could be hung had been made use of for that purpose, and as may be imagined, since the offspring of the great canal was to be the scene of great festivities, those charged with decorating the town had done their utmost on this

occasion. The surface of Lake Timsah was thronged with boats, dahabiehs, and steamers. Where in olden times "naked boys bridled tame water-snakes and charioteered ghastly crocodiles," naked people sported in the waters and performed their morning ablutions. Boats decked with gaudy pennants darted hither and thither, gondolas and caïques gaily painted and flagged gave a kaleidoscopic variety to the scene, sounds of martial music, brass drums and tambours, shepherds' pipes and castanets burst upon the ear as the steamer entered this gem of the isthmus.

Ismailia appears from the lake as a well-built city of some ten thousand inhabitants. The Viceroy's villa shows prominently, nestling among shrubbery and gardens. De Lesseps' mansion, Voisin Bey's châlet, M. Lavallet's house and Hotel des Voyageurs give substance and ornament to the front of the city. Since I was here last year the Viceroy has built a palace, a large pretentious building, which looked well, even grand, from shipboard. The fleet of steamers were moored in the lake opposite the city, and lent magnificence to the scene. A quay bounds the water's edge on the Ismailia side, from which a well-built carriage and traffic road, half a mile in length, runs to the town, which stands on rising ground, a continuation of the El Guisr highlands.

The average depth of the lake is 19 feet. The waters of the Mediterranean were let into it on the 18th November, 1862, amid great rejoicings. It required 84,000,000 cubic metres of water to fill it,

and the process lasted over three months. It is the inland harbour of the isthmus, and looking on its broad blue waters one cannot help thinking that Ismailia ought to become an important city.

The dredges lie anchored on the eastern side of the lake, and a glance at the dark mass, with their forest of spars and funnels, tells you of the great work they have accomplished and of the immense usefulness they have been to the canal company.

CHAPTER V.

Ismailia—A Glimpse of Goshen and the Wilderness of Shur—The Viceroy's Hospitality—A Grumbling Briton—A British Shipowner and his Prejudices—The Bedawi Manœuvres before the Empress—What the Arabs think of Eugenie.

SUEZ, *November 22nd*, 1869.

ISMAILIA stands at the confluence of three canals—the Maritime, the Sweet Water, from Suez to Ismailia, and the canal from Zagazig to Ismailia, which runs through ancient Goshen, a land which recalls hosts of Scripture memories.

Within its confines dwelt the children of Israel, four hundred years in bondage. It was one of the most fertile districts of Egypt. At that time Egypt was powerful, and for many centuries afterwards it was the mistress of the world and the cradle of the arts

and sciences. The desolate desert lying eastward of Ismailia is the first glimpse we have of this once celebrated country.

We may hope that Egypt has remained long enough under the seal, and that now has arrived the time when, after lying so long in dust, she will awake and sing again, blossom and bud, and fill her deserts with fruit.

The commerce of the Christian world is coming to her gates, to her centre. Great changes cannot be expected quickly. Civilising a nation is not the work of a moment. Troublous was the journey of civilisation westward; troublous must be its return. That the civilisation and Christianising of Egypt will be effected some day no sane man can doubt, for civilisation magnetises whatever it touches, and in Egypt's case it comes upon the country with a rush.

Egypt has indeed fallen upon strange times! The whole order of things seems reversed! Pharaoh's land looks upon wonderful anomalies, and from the mastheads of an immense fleet of steamers European sailor boys look upon Goshen, the Wilderness of Shur, and the Amalekite region!

Above the placid ripplings of the Crocodile Lake tower sixty great hulls of steamers. Above the golden sands of the desert crossed by Moses and the children of Jacob rise a forest of spars and cordage. On the shore of Goshen stands a city of the nineteenth century architecture, close to the ruins of Rameses and Pithom. Brick and limestone walls

and wooden structures replace Egyptian pylons, and Swiss châlets and Gothic cottages stand where the idolaters of Egypt bent the knees to Pasht and Apis. Egyptian antiquity has lapsed from its sombre silence and loneliness to youthful mirth and vigour.

These are the thoughts that flitted across my mind as our ship lay at anchor in the sea-green waters of Timsah.

From such a mood I wake up to describe what further befell the fleets of Europe while anchored in Timsah Lake; how the French Empress and the Austrian Emperor were received, and how the mass of stately steamers proceeded on their way to Suez.

As fast as the ships came in and anchored close to their buoys, the passengers, after sufficiently admiring Lake Timsah, scanning with wonder the brownish desert, and having had a fair view of the town of Ismailia from on board, hastened to go ashore for a stroll through the town that appeared so pretty and inviting. Landing at a well-built pier, which was decorated and adorned with painted poles, whence streamed vari-coloured flags and pennants, we came upon a triumphal arch built across the avenue leading from the landing-place into the town.

Our first experience after landing told us too well of what to expect within Ismailia. The pier was crowded with well-dressed strangers and gaily-turbaned Arabs and Turks, as was also the avenue, and, in fact, every street in the town. Wherever

available, tents had been put up by the hospitable Viceroy for the comfort of his guests, and to these were added those belonging to the Arab sheikhs and their retainers, from whence came unceasing strains of melancholy music, from native musicians, whose turbans were larger than usual, and whose kaftans were of fine silk. Blended with these plaintive sounds was the European military music and thousands of voices speaking in all sorts of languages. An extraordinary medley of humanity brushed and elbowed us unceremoniously to the right and to the left, and inconveniently crowded us, and on the great avenue the mass of people was very dense.

There were probably twenty thousand people on shore, who were dressed in all sorts of costumes, and who either stood in groups or flocked wherever there was the least attraction. While the town appears bowered in shrubbery, just beyond it, extending over the horizon, is the desert of sand, yellow, barren, glistening with the heat of the Egyptian sun. Around, nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower, nor aught of vegetative power the weary eye may ken; the sands lie everywhere, smothering all life.

But wonderful is the power of Nile water. With a stream fed by the Sweet Water Canal, which runs from Zagazig to Suez, MM. Lesseps and Voisin have contrived to make a habitable dwelling-place for ten thousand inhabitants in the centre of the desert. The canal runs along a sandy ridge just a few feet above

the level on which the town stands, and to every little fenced plot runs a ditch from which the life-giving water flows through several furrows, over its whole extent.

The effects of the nourishing element on the sands is almost spontaneous. Whatever plant indigenous to Egypt is put into the ground thus watered, thrives and becomes a healthy shrub or tree. Wherever a depression is found in the plot a small lake has been made, where the lotus leaves float on the surface and its borders are fringed with evergreens, aloes, and brilliant-flowering plants. And surrounding these are groves of palms, heavy with clusters of dates, and varieties of trees too numerous to name, which however furnish a grateful shade.

Especially is the power of the Nile water witnessed in the public garden of Ismailia, in the centre of which stands the waterworks. The garden is a perfect little Paradise of but twelve acres in extent, where the very poetry of gardening is illustrated. We see as we lounge along the shaded walks, orange groves so laden with fruit that the boughs hang to the grounds; strawberry patches, green slopes, grape vines in plenty, and glorious palms, while beneath are flowers in full bloom, which make the whole a most enchanting place. One forgets while embowered in them how these gardens were created. By the very exuberance around him, he can think only of their pleasantness; but once out of them, with the pitiless sun pouring overhead,

with the hot sands burning our shoes and scorching our feet, with the fervour from it rising in a volume to our faces, we then think of the skill and trouble which formed this alluring oasis in the desert.

The pretty châlets and cottages of Ismailia are constructed with due respect to regularity of streets and avenues. Each stands in an enclosure by itself, separated from its neighbour by a whitewashed rail fence. Two of these enclosures form a block ; then comes a broad street, on the other side of which commences another enclosure with a house in the centre, and so on to the boundaries of the town.

The châlets fronting the lake are those of M. de Lesseps ; Voisin Bey, the director-general of the works ; M. Lavallet, the contractor ; M. Borel, lately his partner ; M. Dussaud, the Sub-Governor of Ismailia ; then comes the palace of the Governor, built of stone, to which a flight of freestone steps leads from the front. This palace is roomy and spacious, with a front of 250 feet, and a depth of 125. It was begun on the 4th of last June, and is already perfectly completed and fit for habitation. Beyond the palace the main avenue extends half a mile further. The garden of the Governor's palace must be a superb affair when finished, for it is being laid out with great care. A large fresh-water lake has been formed fifty yards to the rear, which is to be a reservoir for the use of the garden.

It was in this palace that the ball and banquet were to be given by the Viceroy to his guests, and very

extensive preparations had been made by those in charge to give a proper reception to them.

On the way back from a tour which I made round Ismailia I met the Empress Eugenie on a dromedary, escorted by M. de Lesseps, going to the review of Arab troops and to witness the sham fight of the Bedouins of the Libyan Desert.

She was dressed in a light habit, with a hat, and a blue veil over her face, and as she passed by I heard the general opinion: "She is most charming, most graceful." She rode her dromedary like a Bedouin, but the poor ladies of honour, it seemed to me, suffered torments. The Duchess of Alba and another lady rode in a basket carriage drawn by ten fleet dromedaries, ridden by Bedawi.

They both looked excessively annoyed and heated. The sham fight was quite a curiosity to those who had never seen one before. About a thousand mounted Bedawi, clad in kaftans and vari-coloured handkerchiefs, menaced each other with yataghan, spear, and matchlock. At a shrill cry from the sheikh of each party they all set up loud cries and galloped towards each other. They fired their matchlocks; drew yataghan or wielded spear, closed up, wheeled round, each one singling an enemy, made furious passes as if he intended mischief, galloped away again, then circled round and repeated the same operation many times over, amid furious cries, shouts of defiance from the sham combatants, and applauding shouts from the Arab bystanders. The Viceroy was

there in person, explaining the movements to the Empress, who seemed much amused and delighted. The whole affair terminated with a review of some five thousand regular Egyptian troops, lancers, artillery, and infantry, who deserved great credit for their manœuvres.

After this the invited guests proceeded to the Sub-Governor's house, in the rear of the portico of which was spread a magnificent lunch of ten courses.

On going to the front portico after lunch I met two English correspondents whose ill humour was excessive. One said, "Here am I, you see, nearly starving, just come from the *Fayoum*, the Viceroy's yacht, which is aground twenty miles from here, and can't budge an inch, and never will, I expect.

"I think, by George, that this is the greatest piece of nonsense ever perpetrated upon a gentleman. The idea of putting a person on board of a vessel drawing sixteen feet of water, which, according to their own accounts, could never pass through the canal; I say it's sheer nonsense, by Jove!"

"But the *Europe*, on which I am," I said quietly, "draws sixteen and a half feet at the stern, and is, next to the *Pelouse*, the largest vessel in the fleet, and we came along first-rate."

"Well, the *Fayoum* can't come," said he, "and it is my opinion she never will. I declare, I have a good mind to go straight to Cairo, and leave this affair altogether, for this is killing work."

"Why," said I, "if you go to Cairo, what will your journal say?"

"I don't care a button what anybody says, or thinks, I'm not going to kill or starve myself for anybody. Tell me, my dear fellow, do you know where tents for the guests are, or if I can get a room at the hotel?"

It is needless to say, I suppose, that I showed this gentleman to the tents, where he might rest, and write a letter, which would catch the mail leaving for Europe the next day. But what kind of letters will these two gentlemen write?

It may amuse you to know that the two correspondents actually returned to Cairo without going through the canal.

While upon this, I might as well repeat another instance of the strong British prejudice that still exists.

A great London shipowner came over to Alexandria to see for himself what the Suez Canal was likely to be. While stopping at a hotel there he got into conversation with a member of a celebrated house doing a large business at Alexandria in the shipping merchant line. The shipowner asked the Anglo-Alexandrian if he had seen the Suez Canal.

"Oh, yes," said the other.

"And what do you think of it?" asked the shipowner.

"I think it a grand work, and no doubt will, when completed, be a highway for commerce to Southern Asia."

"Humph; how deep is it?"

"It is now only averaging 20 feet."

"What is the width?"

"Well, half way it is 300 feet from side to side, and the other half it is a full 246."

"Well, but what is the width of the deepest part?"

"Only 72 feet."

"Humph," said the shipowner; "that is not much; two ships can never pass each other on a width of 72 feet. I have two or three ships over 40 feet beam. Are there any places on the canal where I could stop a day or two?" he asked again.

"Certainly, you may stop at Ismailia, or at Port Said, or at Suez. Port Said is at the Mediterranean entrance, Suez is at the Red Sea entrance, and Ismailia is situated in the centre of the isthmus," answered the Alexandrian.

"Are there any hotels at Ismailia?"

"Yes, there is one called the Hotel des Voyageurs."

"What sort of a place is it?"

"A pretty fair place, indeed, for Ismailia."

"Is there a good table there?" asked the shipowner.

"So-so," answered the other.

"Any fleas?"

"Well, really, I suppose there are as many there as at this hotel."

"Humph," grunted the shipowner; "I presume the ship canal is not much of a place, after all. Only

20 feet of water, and but 72 feet wide; poor hotels, tables 'so-so,' and fleas! I think I shan't go and see it, then."

Neither did the shipowner go and see it, but journeyed back to London by next mail. The above dialogue was given to me by a member of the Alexandria house above alluded to, and it may be taken as fairly illustrative of the strange prejudice that exists among Englishmen respecting the canal.

After our liberal lunch there remained nothing to do during the rest of the afternoon but to wander about and see the sights, make acquaintances, and shake hands with old friends.

The Viceroy had caused to be pitched nearly a thousand tents, with bedding, etc., for guests. Many of these were filled up with German and French savants and historiographers, Italian and Hungarian, Austrian and Spanish correspondents and artists, whom it would be a task to enumerate.

Though it was curious to note the preparations they all made for the ball to take place that night, tickets for which had been given out to all who presented their cards, still it was more interesting to traverse the ground occupied by the Arab sheikhs and their retainers. These independent village chiefs, from the Upper Nile and the Delta, would not have appeared at Ismailia, were it not that the Viceroy had sent and commanded them to appear on pain of his displeasure.

One of these sheikhs was asked, as he journeyed

towards the canal, as to where he was going with such a number of men. He replied that the Khedive had told him to go to Ismailia to show the "Fransawi" ("the French girl") what an Arab fantasiya was. So the lovely Empress, who, with her grace and condescension, kindled all hearts into a high pitch of admiration for her, could receive no higher compliment from a Bedouin than to be called the "French girl." Indeed, from conversation with them through a clever interpreter, they could not be made to understand that the "French girl" was more powerful than their own Khedive, though they were ready to believe that she might be the favourite Sultana of the French Sultan; but why she was permitted to travel abroad, unveiled and without her lord and master, was perfectly unintelligible.

UP THE NILE.

CHAPTER VI.

A Modern Guide for Travel on the great River, and grand fluvial Contrasts — From Cairo onward — The Halting Points, and Shore Scenery—The Guests of the Khedive—Sight-seeing—Whom they met and how they were amused.

CAIRO, EGYPT, *December 26th*, 1869.

A GREAT globe of golden light appeared in the East over the arid Mokattum Range, as the *Ferouz*, an Egyptian Government steamer, left her pier at Bûlac and steamed up the Nile, bearing a number of invited guests of the Khedive.

Above Rhoda, the Nile expands into a stately river. An island, green with waving corn, divides the river into two streams five hundred yards apart. Passing this, the Nile makes a bold curve westward. The Pyramids are seen ahead, Sakhara lies to the left. Then another curve, and the expansive breadth of its waters, its banks abounding with date palms, and its bosom shadowed by many winged feluccas, remind

us that we are really ascending the famous Nile, the great river of Egypt.

From the decks of the steamer we have as full a view as any one might desire of the peculiar Egyptian scenery. We see the great pyramids of Ghizeh, as well as the pyramids of Sakhara, and though the steamer goes too quick for fresh young eyes, groves of delicate palms, and numerous gardens, river scenes, the golden desert on one side, the frowning Mokattum range on the other, are extremely interesting.

Presently getting accustomed to these sights, the mystic colours which tinge the sky, the profile of bluff and plain, the picturesque outlines of palm groves, the grouped figures of men and women on the banks, the solitary dromedary and his rider, the eyes become wearied of taking minute details of the rapidly succeeding sketches, and begin to gaze dreamily around, from horizon to horizon, and we lapse into a semi-drowsy state, out of which it is scarcely possible to waken.

Having arrived at this stage already, I turn to the party in whose company I am to spend several days on the Nile.

There are seventy of us altogether on board, and we have been invited by the Khedive to visit Upper Egypt. Among us are Dr. W. H. Russell, LL.D., whom London journalists call the king of newspaper correspondents, and Miss Russell ; Lord and Lady Pratt ; and three or four British colonels and captains ;

Professor Richard Lepsius, the Egyptologist; Professor Friederichs, archæologist of the Berlin Museum; Commendatore Negri, President of the Italian Geographical Society; Comte Francesco Menescalchi, Senator of the Kingdom of Italy, and Vice-President of the Italian Geographical Society, with his son Comte Francesco; General Chiosto, who planned the military harbour of Spezzia; Rear-Admiral Isola; the painters Uzzi, Benatti, and Marnielle; Commendatore Ubaldini Peruzzi, Deputy of the Italian Chamber, formerly Minister, and now Syndic of Florence; Professor Bonghi, director of the *Perseveranza*, a Milanese journal; M. Eli Reclus, a French *littérateur*, a frequent contributor to magazines; Signor Charles Escalle, editor of the *Journal a'Italie*, Florence; P. Hansen, editor of the *Dagbladet*, Copenhagen; Adolfo Rivadeneyia, Spanish Consul at Damascus; Wilhelm Lauser, representative of the *New Free Press*, Vienna; the entire Swiss Legation; Senor B. Ortuzar, secretary of the Chilian Legation at London, Mons. Cambon, a French official, Captain Camperio, a geographer of Milan, and several other gentlemen of lesser note.

This party has been distributed over two steamers and two dahabiehs which are in tow of the steamers. Within two hours of our departure from Cairo, our party got acquainted with each other with a rapidity quite astonishing. At table I was confronted by Professor Friederichs, of the Berlin University and Museum. The distinguished Professor unfortunately

had a lady friend residing in New York, who, it seems, had corresponded with him upon American topics, and had heedlessly led him all astray upon such things. The Professor argued with me very warmly upon the subject of liberty of conscience in America during the first morning. He maintained from the New York lady's standpoint that there was no liberty of conscience in America, that the preachers were mostly ill-educated, corrupt, and hypocritical. A few, according to him, such as Beecher, Tyng, Dix, etc., might be exempted from that category. Though the American churches exhibited no art in their construction, they were yet so exclusive, that a poor man could find no sitting room in God's house; that Mr. Bancroft, the historian, now minister at Berlin, who was one of the finest gentlemen he ever knew, preferred Germans to his own countrymen, because American students at Berlin did not address Mr. Bancroft as "His Excellency"; that Mr. Bancroft lived in better style than any German prince, which quite astonished him (the Professor), as he had imagined that American ministers would have imitated the virtuous Franklin. As Professor Friederichs expressed great contempt for the opinions of young men, and for mine in particular, I resolved to avenge myself by giving his views to a wider audience.

It was about noon of the first day that we began to realise what Egyptian heat is like. The mornings are chilly, and voyagers find shawls and overcoats comfortable at that time. But at noon the palms

swim in the mirage, and their tufted tops appear like dark islets in mid air. The Arabian mountains appear dim in the haze. Far ahead tower chimneys of sugar manufactories, and the slanting lateen yards appeared like mystic shadows. The low banks on the western side represent the several phases of Egyptian scenery. Mud huts thatched with palm branches rise a few feet above the ground, overtopped by a minaret or the cupola of a sheikh's tomb. On the river we see what remind us of the Scripture saying, "The land shadowy with wings"—for at all times during the day one may see the graceful dahabieh or the still more graceful kanjeah, or perhaps the heavily laden felucca, bulwarked with dung plaster, with their huge lateen sails spread to catch each breeze, dreamily gliding on the Nile's broad bosom, heedless of ruins, sheikh's tombs resting solitary under the palms, and of the honey-combed mountain ranges which have seen many such vessels, through long, long eras, glide and float by.

Southward we proceed, with the formidable eastern mountain range on our left, within a mile or so of the river, with neither peak nor ravine to break its grim front, and with the western bank on our right expanding broadly, dark with vegetation, until sunset, when we find ourselves at Benisûef, about seventy miles south of Cairo.

After hauling alongside of the mud bank, which on the Nile answers all the purposes of a pier, the passengers sprang ashore for a friendly invasion of

the burgh of Benisûef. Two Abyssinian boy slaves and a Government cawass led the way, holding ship lanterns above their heads, in order that the well-dressed visitors who brought up the rear might not fall headlong into the pitfalls and ditches with which the path was intersected. We were a curious set of people, delighted with everything we saw; and expressing our humour in noisy shouts and laughter, at which the "Mashallahs" of the inhabitants were frequent.

We asked loudly for permission to see a fantasiya, or an Arab dance. The inhabitants in return begged for bakshish, to which our friends replied with shouting and laughter. Certainly, after the fantasiya. "Taib howajji taib," (good, sir, good). "Taib howajji; come this way," and our glad ciceroni led the way through dark lanes and the bazaar of Benisûef.

"Mashallah," cried the portly Turkish merchants, sitting in their dark recesses, surrounded by wares of silken kerchief, crimson cloth, Bedouin shawls and kaftans, pipes and narghilehs, and fruits and spices from tropic lands.

"Mashallah" echoed the half-naked, hungry-eyed boys and girls of Benisûef. "Mashallah" chorussed the many blind beggars, as our party defiled past, one by one, in all the glory of Frankish costume.

In a secluded part of the town of Benisûef lived the frail Ghawazi, for as they were held to be immoral by zealous Moslems, they lived apart. We saw none extravagantly beautiful among them, but they were

graceful and pretty enough as they appeared unveiled, before us, to bargain for the entertainment.

Three Ghawazi named Fatmeh, Ismeh, and Zenuba, were engaged to dance at a sovereign each. We formed a circle, upwards of sixty of us, and sat on benches. Coffee was served to us in brass finjans. I thought it highly romantic as we all sat under the palms.

An old man, who must have seen sixty summers, drew his double-fluted reed fife from under his kaftan and blew a melancholy note; a younger man gave one or two preliminary taps on his tarabuka, and the Ghawazi Fatmeh appeared before us at the call.

The *danseuse* was dressed in a costume of crimson silk so loosely covering the body that through its flimsy texture every outline of her form was visible. The lower part was tucked up at the knees, while the folds hung flowing over. A vestment of blue silk spangled with gold half shadowed the luxuriant bosom, but so slight was the material that through it almost burned the deep brown skin. A gold-braided cap set jauntily on her head was the only head-dress she wore; and down her neck fell her hair in many threadlike plaits. Bracelets of gold encircled her wrists and the upper half of her arms; a narrow gold band cinctured the waist, and from this hung several tiny silver bells, which jingled melodiously as she moved. Her eyes glowed and sparkled like twin stars. She burst into loud merriment as the kindly and appreciative Franks applauded, and then she

gave her body a wonderful spin with an intoxicating movement which drew many a warm "Brava" from the Italians. The orchestra, consisting of a double flute, an oblong drum, and a single-stringed guitar, commenced the weirdest of weird music. In sympathy with the low but thrilling notes, a quiver ran over the Ghawazi's body, and as it waxed stronger, Fatmeh lightly resting on a cane caused a succession of quivers to pass over her body.

The old man advanced—he was hideous in comparison with Fatmeh—and with notes high and wild as from a lost soul shrieking its fear, he invited the Ghawazi to follow him. Fatmeh, as though under the influence of the music, was as docile as a snake in the hands of the charmer, or a child under the mesmerist. Her eyes were veiled by their eyelids, while the body rippled and quivered from head to foot as she dreamily revolved around the charmer. Once round the circle, the Ghawazi broke from the influence of the zumarra, and by two lithe movements reached the centre, where a carpet had been spread to receive her. Then followed a pantomime of the passion of love, exhibited so faithfully that the spectators were absorbed in the representation. Sufficient must be the suggestion. In an artistic sense the acting was perfect. The movement of the muscles in harmony with the thrilling music and the ticking clatter of her silver castanets ; the continuity of the movement of one muscle after another, from neck to ankle, and the successive undulations over the

whole body, like tiny ripples chasing each other in a lakelet, were superb, and showed remarkable dramatic gifts and muscular power. This closed Fatmeh's performance.

There now burst forth a wilder strain, and Zenuba sprang lightly to her station. Zenuba was a ripe girl of fourteen, a blonde, of Circassian parentage, with two full cherry lips, cheeks round and rosy as the pomegranate, eyes of such blueness that made us think of the azure sky. She stood for a moment still as a statue, lightly resting on one small plump foot, slippered in gold, before the reed-blower. Suddenly, sympathising with a chord, she started; and her wide and flowing silk trousers rustled like foliage in a breeze, and she again became motionless. Then a soft wail issued from the zumarra, and Zenuba in response commenced a dreamy revolution around the circle, her arms extended, her hands languidly beating time with two pairs of silver castanets. Her movements were so dreamily responsive that she appeared to be utterly under the charm of the zumarra. Having revolved thus around the circle, she swept with two quick whirls of her body to the centre, where she took position on the carpet in the full glare of the numerous lamps.

We now saw the use of the light textile robes she wore, for the movements that followed would have been impossible had she worn a tight-fitting dress. Under the influence of a music which was slow and plaintive, Zenuba slowly bent backward, her wealth

of brown hair streaming behind her like a veil. Having touched the carpet with her hair, she slightly raised herself and extended her right leg, while her body moved itself in an opposite direction. And in this posture she caused the muscles from her bosom to her feet to vibrate in unison with her clicking castanets, the deep throbbing sound of the tarabuka, and the zumarra's sweet melancholy tones. Whether it was sorrow or love she acted, it was intensely affecting.

Gently she slid to her knees, and her body to the ground, keeping a convulsive time continually, and then slowly rising swayed from side to side without the least break in the dramatic action, while still her waist and bosom moved, and her head swayed to the measure.

Slowly the lovely head descended to the breast, mournfully the castanets clicked, more drawn became the reed notes of the zumarra, sadder became the tarabuka, the breathing became quicker, the body heaving convulsively, the muscles rising and falling oftener, until the head descended to the ground. Then the hands were upraised, each muscle throbbed as if beneath there pulsed a heart, the body continually revolving rose and fell, with the knees curled beneath. Lower the music sounded, slower became the movements, and one long-drawn note of the zumarra, a continuous rumble of the tarabuka, one long convulsive movement of the body, closed the performance, and the Ghawazi lay almost lifeless on the ground.

Our Frankish audience had been excited to the highest pitch by this last dramatic pantomime, and the silver showered on the girl testified too well of the admiration which her superb pantomime had excited.

Being late, we did not stay to see Ismeh dance, and we returned to our several boats much pleased with our entertainment.

When there was just enough of daylight to locate Benisûef we moved from our berth and headed up river. The Nile opened before us, smiling a welcome to the strangers. The freshness of the morning was upon the stream and its shores. Each sandbank was alive with pelicans, flamingoes, and white ibis. High above the river continued the lofty Arabian highlands, level topped, grey and utterly sterile. Westward a sea of foliage stretched, and the scene was as that of yesterday, with flat-roofed adobe huts squatting low under the palms, and sycamores, with fields of vast extent green with corn and lentils, sugar cane and bean stalks, and an endless variety of vegetable products.

The Nile varies its width greatly at every short distance. In colour it resembles the Mississippi. Were it not for the palms, the mud huts and sky of Egypt, the scenery along the banks might be taken for that along the Mississippi between St. Louis and Cairo; but the feathery foliage of the palms, at all times delightful to look at, and the sapphire-coloured sky, and the sun which tints everything with magic

glow and richness, and such shores, bounded on one side by a range of mountains honey-combed with tombs, and on the other side by temple ruins, can be seen nowhere but in Egypt.

Legends hang to every mile of the eastern range. About here the ghost of Sheikh Embarak for ever haunts them, and from him the bluffs have derived the name Gebel Sheikh Embarak. Hagar E' Selim, which is detached from the huge mass above, and now shoots above the surface of the Nile, is regarded by boatmen as auguring well for the happy termination of the voyage when once they have passed it. What was Sheikh el Fadhl, above Abu Girgeh? Sheikh el Fadhl was an Arab hermit of great sanctity, who lived upon the mountain summit for many years. "Oh, such a long, long time ago." Sheikh Hassan, also a high, bold limestone mountain, split in two by a deep ravine—what legend is that which gives this name to it? The numerous tombs chiselled in the rock, the hieroglyphics which mark the mountain's smooth, bold front; mounds of brick and *débris*, the tombs of sheikhs, the ruins of convents, with perhaps a solitary palm grove near by—each and all have their history. The Arab traditions give but faintest echoes of the lives which once joyed or sorrowed upon these mountains. For the Friedrichs of Mizraim, there are no Carlyles; for Egyptian Johnsons there lived no Boswells; for the Brontës there were no Gaskells. How delightful would it have been to read their biographies on

the Nile voyage, to have their lives before us, such as a Carlyle or a Gaskell could write them!

We approach the Bird mountain (Gebel et-Tèr) towards sunset. It is a mass of rock, rising perpendicularly from the water's edge to the height, perhaps, of 300 feet. As the steamers drew abreast of this mountain some twenty human vultures, who had descried us from afar, leaped into the river and came swimming towards us, crying, "Bakshish, howajji; ya Christian, howajji." (Alms, gentlemen; I am a Christian, gentlemen.) A barbarian, after laying hold of the towing ropes, dragged himself on board, and soon after another and another, until we had a dozen naked men on board, holding out their hands, and in pitiful tones crying out their mendicant chant, "Bakshish, howajji; ya Christian, howajji."

The tones adopted by these people are such as to command the attention. It is half imperious, half whining, like that of a famine-stricken wretch; but when we look round to see the owners of the voices, we are startled to find them athletes, whose muscles stand out like tumours on their bodies. Bakshish was of course given to the daring mendicants, who, immediately after, clapping their hands above their heads and uttering glad cries, jumped overboard. We followed them with our eyes; we saw them bobbing towards the dahabiehs in tow of our steamer; we saw them climb the sides and uttering the same half whining, half imperious cry, "Bakshish, howajji; ya Christian, howajji."

An hour afterwards the eastern banks underwent a change. Instead of one single mass of high rocks, the range showed several wide ravines, at the entrance of one of which the fellahs had squatted and had made the greatest use of every inch of the soil deposited by the Nile; they had built their huts like swallows' nests, and their narrow strips of green corn promised a good harvest.

The sun at evening seems to remember the days of old, when at morn and evening the thousands of Egypt bent the knee to him; for he goes down in glory indescribable, never seen in northern climes. On this evening all was calm, no fringed leaf of palm waved, the face of the river was like a burnished steel mirror, smooth, shining, motionless. Great avalanches of clouds gathered themselves together on the western horizon, until they towered one upon another, Alps upon Alps, and through them the sun was seen slowly descending. In a moment, as it were, the sun had painted them a thousand colours. As viewed through the foliage of the palms the scene was inconceivably grand. There was a broad azure lake, bordered and overhung by drifting gauzy vapour; close to it was a mountain of gold, through which ran a stream of blue, above and around were eyots of gold, surrounded by purple, by azure, by saffron and brownish streams, all of which rapidly changed their hues. The artists from Rome and Naples exclaimed, "*Stupendo bellissimo.*" Painters from Madrid uttered their *magnificos*. German scene-

painters and limners cried out, "*Wunderbar! Wunderbar,*" and we ordinary itinerants at this matchless setting of the sun could but swell the chorus of enthusiastic exclamations in our own insane way, until the magnificent twilight, which seemed like a glimpse of heaven, had become utter darkness.

An hour later our steamers were secured to the banks at Minyeh, 130 miles from Cairo. Minyeh does not merit description. It is an Arab town of considerable size and contains a bazaar. A railway connects it with Cairo.

Ever the same mornings and the same unsurpassed days, the same eternal verdure, the same zigzag contour of eastern bluffs the same light brown river, shadowed by fleet dahabiehs carrying Frankish howajji, with every bend and reach of the river bordered by palms. But after passing Minyeh the dark cavernous openings in the face of the cliffs are seen oftener, and the mounds which tell of ruined cities are more frequent. The eastern side engrosses the attention, because the Arabian bluffs come within a few feet of the water almost all the way to Manfalût.

There is a mound at the town of Sovadec, on the eastern side. There are many tombs in the bluffs above Neslit e Zoroyeh. After passing by these, half way up the face of a stupendous cliff, are seen the Benihassan tombs, which, next to the pyramids of Sakhara and Ghizeh, are said to be the oldest sepulchres in Egypt. They are numerous and

spacious, and in the form of a series of chambers cut out of the hard limestone rock and entered into by pillared portals of different dimensions. On each wall of the twenty-five tombs are representations of the lives of the principal personages once buried therein, with the cartouche of the king in whose reign each person lived. A cartouche, you must know, is an oval ring, in which is sculptured the outlines of a beast, a bird, a goose, a pelican, or any animal, bird, or thing which, after the principle of our "child's alphabet," represents the name of a king, prince, or priest, whom the cartouche is intended to perpetuate.

These hieroglyphic characters, which are almost as fresh to-day as when they were first made, discover to the learned the manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians. The arts of trade, commerce, manufactures, and games of this ancient people are found sketched in the hard stone or stucco within their tombs. Souvenir gatherers have, however, made sad work of many of them, and Arabs, following their example, do not hesitate to detach portions of the finest paintings to sell to travellers. It is to be deeply regretted that the Egyptian Government have not adopted the precautions which the Greek Government have been compelled to take for the preservation of the Parthenon and other temples; but I suppose a day will come when the tombs will have more care taken of them. But, thanks to Sir Gardiner Wilkinson, Mr. Lane, and Professor Lepsius,

we have most accurate drawings of the whole in books.

Entering one very large, roomy, cave-like tomb, the architraves of which were supported by Doric fluted pillars, we found on the walls a most curiously illustrated history of Egyptian life and manners. Men may be seen wrestling, from the advance to the attack, to the downfall of one or both of the parties. Two men play at singlestick with their left arms defended by shields of wood or leather; two dwarfs; soldiers bearing shields in compact bodies of foot and horse; silver and goldsmiths at their trade, blowing the fire of the crucible, weighing the metal and adjusting the scales; taskmasters with sticks superintending slaves making bricks; strangers with Israelitish noses coming to Pharaoh (Phra, as written) with offerings of peace; spinners at their spindles, etc. Human bones, heads, legs, and arms, swathed and impregnated with pitch, are strewn about the entrances to the tombs and on the side of the cliffs.

Sir Gardiner reports the villagers of Benihassan great thieves, but we did not stay long enough to test their honesty, though their pertinacious entreaties for bakshish entitle them to the first rank of beggars. A little east of Benihassan is what the Greeks called Speos Artemidos, and by the Arabs Stabl Antar, which was dedicated to Pasht the Diana of Egypt. The temple is excavated out of the rock.

Near Rôda the Nile expands into a grand

breadth. Steamers keep close to the eastern bank where the strong, deep current makes fearful work with it, sweeping away many rods of rich soil. The tall chimneys of the sugar manufactories of Rôda appear like obelisks. On the western side behind the green expanse you can faintly discern the Lybian desert.

At dark we hauled up at Manfalût. Struggling through the dark in long array of Franks, after the curious and picturesque, we heard a great shouting, near the bazaar, and a medley of voices so inharmonious and deafening that all of us instinctively stopped our ears. This noise proceeded from a procession of men of all trades, and women and children, who were ushering in the Ramadan.

First there came a chanting crowd of men and boys singing a melancholy song, then there followed a lot of agriculturists holding above their heads palm branches, acacia boughs in bloom, a sheaf of sugar cane, or of cornstalks, and a branch of acanthus leaves. Then followed a chorus of smiths, who at the same time plied their trade on portable forges, beating red-hot iron on anvils, which were borne by diminutive donkeys. Following these came butchers, who caused little boys to represent the animals they were supposed to kill. To illustrate faithfully the operation of killing, the little boys were made to lie down, while the butchers rapidly made motions with their knives over their bodies, the boys imitating as well as possible the cries of the animals supposed to be

killed. After these came the brickmakers, some of whom carried hoppers full of mud, while others moulded the bricks, or bore them away to be dried. Masons also chiselled away at stones, which were borne by men, who preceded them ; carpenters with their adzes and saws cut boards ; shoemakers cobbled shoes and repaired sandals ; tailors made kaftans and burnouses, and so on in a continuous procession. The way was lighted by torches carried by women and girls, who also welcomed with shrill chants the coming of the Ramadan.

Manfalût contains ten thousand inhabitants. It is situated close to the river on the site of an ancient city, remains of which, however, cannot be found, except in baths and in the walls of large residences.

Ossyoot, Assiût or Siût, was reached the next day at 10 A.M. It being the capital of modern Egypt, and situate close to the tombs of ancient Lycopolis —the "City of the Wolves"—it is one of the important stopping-places of European travellers up the Nile. Upon the banks waited the donkey-boys for fares. "Here is your donkey, sir," exclaimed a little urchin of eight years, pushing his proud little animal between my legs. "Berry good, sir ; Yankie Doodle is his name, sir." "No, sir," said another, pushing his donkey from rearward ; "this is Billy Robinson, sir, best donkey in Siût."

We "donkeyed" our way through El Hamra, the port of Siût, and over a causeway, part of which is very ancient, rode direct to the base of Stabl Antar.

The tombs are numerous, far more so than at Beni-hassan, but, excepting one or two, they are not so well preserved as those at the latter place. The largest of them is called Stabl Antar by the Arabs. It is like a temple cut in the rock. It penetrates 80 feet into the hard limestone and is 60 feet in width, divided into pillared chambers. The sides are sculptured and some parts are covered with stucco, which yet retain their brilliant colouring. The other tombs rise above each other over the entire face of the mountain, and in their floors are sunk many square pits which contain much *débris*, mummy linen, bones, &c. Some of the pits are 30 feet deep, of the shape of ordinary graves.

In the largest tombs are several chambers surrounding one large central chamber, wherein the mummies of the wolves which were sacred in Lycopolis were placed. In one of the three upper tombs was found a pit, containing absolutely nothing else save bandages, skulls of mummies, arms and feet of mummies. Raking over a corner with my cane, I found three infant skulls, the bones of which were just as hard and fresh as if they had been buried but a few years ago. Another gentleman picked up a thin, short forearm and hand, probably belonging to a boy or girl of tender age, in contemplating which the bystanders naturally fell to moralising upon the littleness of humanity, upon the circumstances which led people to adopt such great care to preserve their dead, and upon

the skill and might of the Egyptians. But the arm was thrown carelessly down, and for the time we bade a truce to moralising, and ascended to the summit of the mountain to get a view of the Nile valley.

All who see that view from the height of Stabl Antar will remember it as long as they live. We were immensely gratified by it, and thought it worth more than all the mummies. The ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans who lived in Lycopolis must have also thought it worth seeing, for the place of ascent is worn as smooth by footsteps as the Pnyx at Athens, on which ambitious travellers love to pace, that they may swear that they have stood on the same place whence Demosthenes and Pericles addressed Grecian audiences.

Though four thousand years have passed since first Lycopolis was a city, no change has taken place in the view from Stabl Antar ; though dynasties after dynasties, Osiris, Setti, Rameses, Pharaohs, Ptolemies, and Cleopatras, Persians, Greeks, and Romans have all been laid with their fathers, that portion of the Nile valley is ever green, ever beautiful, unchangeable, and unchanging. Fifteen miles to the eastward are the Arabian shores. Between us and those shores flows the "Jove-born Egyptus," in a score of vein-like streams. Though its waters are muddy, the Nile is a good genius. From a distance its waters are even beautiful, and they flow amid delicious green herbage and shrubbery. It is scarcely possible to imagine a

happier scene than that extending to the south and north.

There are British, American, Spanish, and Prussian consular agencies at Siût. The American Presbyterian mission is, next to the one at Alexandria, the most important in Egypt.

Girgeh, the port of Abydos, about 340 miles above Cairo, was reached about noon the next day. Abydos introduces the traveller to the first temple ruins in Egypt. Few tourists have stopped here, because the ride occupies four hours, and the ruins were so choked up with sand that very little of them were to be seen. But on the occasion of the Empress of the French's visit these ruins were cleared out to the floor by M. Mariette, keeper of the Cairo Museum, by order of the Khedive. Since Abydos required a whole day to visit its ruins, we did not start until morning of the next day, when, at five o'clock, after a cup of coffee we started on camels, horses, and donkeys, provided, by the Governor at the Khedive's expense.

Our road lay along the banks of Bahr Yûsef, or Joseph's River, past groves of date palms and acacia, mixed with tamarisk and sycamore, through vegetable gardens and fields of young wheat and corn, until we came to the village of Bardees, which we reached at 6 A.M.; then crossing an old intersecting bridge, we headed direct for the desert, at the edge of which the ruins of Abydos stood.

In Strabo's time a grove of acanthus grew close to

Abydos, but now the palms are more numerous. The first indications of the ruins are heaps of dried Nile sediment, fragments of pottery, and sun-dried bricks. Arab villages formerly occupied the summit. A crude brick enclosure, built in waving lines of great strength, indicates the site of an Egyptian fortress. Beyond this a path leads over a mound, through a miserable village and by a small lake bordered with palm shoots, which having surmounted, you look down into the ruins of the temple. A profound sympathy with the ancient Egyptians took possession of us, as, gazing below on the interesting ruins, we were introduced to the first temple which meets the European traveller as he ascends the Nile. And with this was a certain feeling of hatred towards the despoilers who levelled its pillars and destroyed the exquisite designs so brilliant with azure and gold, and so grand in conception.

As the temple stands to-day it appears as though just completed. The stones are clean and unstained, and the blocks lying outside the temple in profusion add to the idea of newness. But, descending to the dromos, now vacant of its couchant Sphinxes, its desolation is impressive. We made no pause before the ruined towers and the red granite columns of the pylon, nor before the numberless colossal figures of deities and kings which were sculptured upon the walls of the propylæ. Our time was short, and to the uninitiated in antiquity, who cannot read the ancient hieroglyphs, one general look will suffice.

Before leaving the front court, the rows of mutilated statues of Osiris revealed to us something of that awe which touched Egyptian hearts into reverent worship, and we tried to conceive the temple when complete, and the people crowded in at springtime and harvest to observe the anniversary of Isis' return from the search after Osiris, and her victory over the wicked deity, Typhon. But imagination is vain for such a task, for the avenue of Sphinxes leading towards the towering propylæ, enriched with the blue-winged Horbat, and streaming standards of Pharaoh, and a thousand other things, are wanting.

Once within the temple our eyes were kept busy enough peering at the bull Apis, which represents Osiris ; at a hawk-headed god, which is Mandu ; at the serene majesty of Isis, the queen goddess ; at youthful Horus, the child of Osiris and Isis ; at a thousand cartouches and innumerable sculptures and paintings on the alabaster inner casing of the walls. The figures are all brilliant with paint. The bold, masterly hand of the sculptor seems never to have been at fault. If one but stays to admire the figure of a king, to whom has been given an air of magnificent superiority, he will see how the artist has attempted to be faithful in his colouring, even in the hem of the kingly robe, and of each link of a gold chain or bracelet ; the helmet, girdle, sceptre, and spear has its appropriate colouring. There are over twenty rooms, great and small, in the temple, which are well worth examination.

About two hundred paces south of Osiris' temple is the palace of Memnon, said to have been completed by Rameses the Great. It is a most superb structure and almost entire. A mysterious gloom, suggestive of religious influences, pervades its halls. Every foot of the walls and columns is covered with fine sculpture; but the very faintest trace only is left of the colouring which redeemed the halls from gloom. The ceilings, for instance, so brightly blue once, with thousands of glowing stars to represent an Egyptian sky, are now blackened with smoke, and the pillars and walls of the palace, formerly transplendent with paintings, are now sombre from their long burial.

The Arabs have bestowed an apt name upon it—viz., "Arâbat el Matfûn," which means the "buried.' We owe it to Pococke and the indefatigable Benzoni, and after these to Bankes, Brugsch, Lepsius, and Mariette, that the temple palace of Memnon is exhumed.

There are four kinds of columns here. In the portico are twenty-four columns, in two rows of twelve each, the capitals of which are of the papyrus bud pattern. These columns are from 50 to 60 feet high, and 15 feet in circumference. In the Hall of Assembly are thirty-six columns of the same massive size and height, and from this hall a great portal leads into the sanctuary, or adytum, at the back of which are several arched chambers. In the sides are lateral chambers, with polygonal and octagonal columns, capitaled after the full shape of the lotus

flower. Four perfect flights of stairs lead to the roof, which is flat and composed of immense blocks resting on their sides. We—invited guests—sat down *à la Turque* on the floor of the Assembly Hall to a most royal lunch, and in flowing glasses of Montrachet, Chablis, Haut Sauterne, and Champagne we drank to the "*requiescat in pace*" of the great Rameses.

We returned to Girgeh, where we arrived at sunset, well pleased with our ride across the valley of the Nile and the wonderful ruins of Abydos. Over an excellent dinner and to the sound of champagne corks popping we recited to each other, amid merry jests and laughter, our experiences, not forgetting Dr. W. H. Russell's admirable discourse on Egyptology, which he had delivered in the many columned hall of the sun-god.

CHAPTER VII.

DENDERAH, OR TENTYRA, TO THEBES.

CAIRO, *December 27th*, 1869.

FROM Girgeh to Keneh is a good day's journey by steamer. Keneh is the Nile port of Cosseir, on the Red Sea, from which place it is distant forty-seven miles. It is a well-built and large town, and contains some substantial buildings, among which may be named

the Prussian Consul's house. The Consul is said to have an income of £30,000 a year. He is quite a young man, and probably has taken the consulate to protect his property from governmental rapacity. The night of our arrival he invited us to his house, whereat he performed the courtesies of a host according to Arab custom.

Keneh being on the eastern bank of the river, we crossed over to the western side at sunrise the next morning, to visit the temples at Denderah or Tentyra. The ruins of Tentyra are very interesting. After a study of the entire temple at this place, the plan of an Egyptian temple becomes more intelligible to the traveller. Its sculptures are also in the most perfect state of preservation. Savants say that Tentyra's temple, which is dedicated to Hathor, the Egyptian Venus, is not old ; that its oldest portion was the work of Cleopatra. A colossal figure of this famous Egyptian queen is found sculptured on the back of one of the buildings. She is represented with a full heavy face, but the form is graceful, and the features are not wanting in beauty.

The effect is indeed imposing, as, standing before the portico, the grandeur of the columned space, and the view of the interior, of hall and corridor and sanctuary, bursts upon us. We long to hurry through to examine what is behind the portico—to see the adyta and sanctuary of so complete a temple—but the exquisite architecture of the portico restrains us. Twenty-four columns support the portico. Beyond

this there is a small hall, where the sun streams through two apertures slanting through the roof. Beyond this again is the sanctuary of sanctuaries, sculptured to the full, and outside it are corridors, whence admission is gained into chambers ranged around the entire exterior. From a chamber to the left an inclined plane leads to the roof. Once on the roof, which is of the same strength and thickness as the walls, the architecture and uses of an Egyptian temple are appreciated. The walls are ten feet thick, the roof is about ten feet deep, and the former rises above the latter several feet, like the rampart of a castle. From the roof to the top of the walls an ascent is made by stairs as well as to the castle-like pylons, and from these again secret passages communicate with the roof and chambers below.

The temple of Hathor is one of the most complete in Egypt. Every part of it is well worth seeing. It makes one long to linger there, to have a lasting remembrance of it. As we are not antiquarians, we do not examine each sculptured figure and cartouche, for to the unlearned in such matters, one and all appear the same. Offerings appear to be made by kings wearing the same kind of crowns to the deities, who are horn-headed, globe-headed, hawk-headed, or lion-headed ; still, there remains a desire to stray about its cool halls, and let the mind pay its secret homage to the great builders and sculptors of old Egypt.

Those ancient Egyptians were mighty men. They never laid hands to anything of public interest unless

they thought well of it, and then they made it enduring. Though the Ptolemies built the portico, yet over 2000 years is a long time, and to-day it is nearly as perfect as when Ptolemy finished its construction. It will last 2000 years more, provided that no rough, destroying hand of man is laid upon it, for time appears to possess no power over an Egyptian temple, and the soft atmosphere and warm sun are considerate with the splendid buildings. If the lofty pyramids of Ghizeh appear injured, it must not be laid to the elements, but to Cambyses and Moslems; and Abydos owes its ruins to the cruel Persians.

There are several other interesting ruins at Denderah. A chapel of Isis lies behind the temple of Hathor; another ruin lies a short distance north-east of it, while all around is buried in a mountainous accumulation of bricks, broken pottery and dust. Considerable excavations have been made here by Mr. Mariette, but no great results as yet have rewarded him. He still continues his labour of love, and often the head of a statue or the capital of a pillar is discovered, together with scores of images in earthenware and bronze.

From Denderah to Thebes occupied nearly five hours by steamer.

Thebes is the great event of the Nile voyage. The ruins are so vast, and the glories of Thebes have so often been sung by poets and writers, that all hearts yearn for them. Thebes is described by Homer as "Pouring her heroes through a hundred gates."

We were permitted to stay at Thebes two days, and I shall therefore give a description of the ruins as we saw them. On the first day, we visited Luxor and Karnak, on the second we were occupied in seeing the tombs of the kings, Asasif, Abd el Kurnah, the Ramesseum, the colossi of Memnon, Medînet Hâbu, and Dêr el Medineh.

Luxor, which is a corruption of the Arabic name El Kasr, stands on the east or right bank within a few yards of the landing-place. Its temple was one of the greatest and most important in Thebes, yet in "guides" it is spoken of disparagingly, because probably the miserable mud huts and other modern buildings which are built upon a large portion have put the writers out of humour with Luxor. If the temple were cleared of the rubbish, perhaps the view of its seventy-two columned portico and its grand hall would well repay the trouble and cost of unearthing it.

From the front pylon, which fronts Karnak or northward, to the rear portico, the entire length of the temple is 638 feet. Its entire breadth is not known, for the close mass of Arab huts within the courts effectually prevent measurement, but by going in on all fours into these Arab huts, we saw a profusion of capitals which capped the columns that support them. Only utter barbarians would have dared to desecrate a temple of such splendour with mud huts. One wonders whether Ismail, the Khedive, knows of such things being done by these vile

creatures. There was one—a greater than he—who did not disdain to use a scourge for lesser offences.

This temple, placed on higher ground than any others, must have appeared a fit rival to Karnak. Before the front pylon stands a solitary obelisk of red granite, the mate of that which stands in the Place de la Concorde, Paris. To the right and left are four colossi, defaced, scarred, mutilated and buried to the rim of their crowns. Entering the pylon, we ought to have come to a larger area, with covered cloisters on each side ; but this is all filled up with adobe huts and rubbish to the depth of forty feet. Proceeding forward through a small lane, past a mosque, we enter the grand assembly hall, fourteen columns of which alone stand, but these are of the largest class, being eleven feet in diameter. It is impossible to go further from the front, so that steps must be retraced, an entrance being effected to the sanctuary and adyta from the rear. In a lateral hall near the sanctuary two Corinthian pillars of an old Greek church stand. Side by side with the gigantic columns of the Luxor temple these columns of the Greeks appear puny and insignificant, and it is to the credit of Egyptian art to be placed in such juxtaposition to its Greek rival.

From Luxor we hastened to Karnak, situate a mile and a half north of the former, along what was once an avenue of ram-headed sphinxes.

The matchless avenue of sphinxes, which lined the whole distance from Luxor to Karnak, 3500 years ago,

may be traced for about half the distance. One may say of the great blocks which lie crumbling on each side of us, they were sphinxes once, but too few of them retain that figure and form now.

About halfway to Karnak we come to a square hollow in which there are about sixty statues of Ptah of black granite, many of which are still upright. This hollow was the terminus of a temple. Proceeding a short distance further, we see a solitary pylon, and beyond, a few score paces to the left, we arrive at the front of the great temple of Karnak.

So many eminent writers have described it, that it is scarcely possible for a casual traveller at the tail end of a procession such as ours to say anything new. But we may express our admiration and wonder with the best of them. Take your Sir Gardiner in hand, or your Mr. Lane, or your Champollion, and each of them will guide you over the ruins. But, in spite of the learned coterie, you will find nothing in all the books to equal your own thoughts. You feel you wish to linger before the temple pylon, look up at the stately height of the propylæ, at the wide embrasures in its front, at the colossi sculptured thereon, at the ruinous masses of stone looking so freshly quarried, yet chiselled ages ago. You would fain stay before the vista of columns, and halls, and obelisks, sanctuaries and walls, as you stand like a tiny pigmy in the portal.

Great is the Parthenon enthroned upon the Athenian Acropolis ; great is the Coliseum at Rome,

with its sad history; but greater and statelier by far is Karnak temple.

We pass under the pylon, and come to a spacious area measuring 329 feet by 275 feet; another pylon and a vestibulum, about 50 feet in depth, terminates this, and we are in the famous hall of Karnak, with its hundred and forty gigantic pillars. This hall measures 170 by 329 feet. Beyond it is another hall, with an obelisk still standing, and beyond this yet another hall, which has an obelisk measuring 8 feet square. This latter hall is surrounded by Osiride pillars, all of which, however, are mutilated. Out of the Oriside hall we step into the sanctuary of sanctuaries, constructed of exquisitely polished red granite, with aisles and passages surrounding it, and back of the sanctuary are two other halls, until we have arrived at the circuit wall, and have traversed the length of 1180 feet. A temple, 1180 feet long by 329 feet wide. What is St. Peter's of Rome to this?

But we cannot be induced to rush so hurriedly through the temple in this manner. The great hall of Karnak holds us spell-bound. We wonder at its length, at its breadth, at its height, at the marvellous tracery of sculptor's chisel over it, at the stupendous columns, which rise sixty-two feet from the floor, and are eleven feet in diameter; at the patches of brilliant and exquisite colouring visible here and there, and we wish to imagine all this when it was in its glory. Then the obelisks, with their tops spiring into the clear air, and pointing to the all-serene heaven of

Thebes, demand the attention, and the massive Osirides, thirty feet in height, each composed of a single block ; the beautiful ornature of the sanctuary and its surroundings ; the lintel stones, forty feet in length ; each and all these are subjects of wonder.

Yet these are but a tithe of what is to be found at Karnak. Mount the circuit walls, the lofty pylon facing the Nile, or the still loftier propylæ. Look around, below, above, and admiration succeeds to admiration, wonder to wonder. As for the sculptures on the walls, they are too varied for detail. The day will come perhaps when in each temple there will be boards on each side containing the inscriptions and their interpretation for the benefit of the traveller, which must necessarily add to the interest of the hieroglyph library.

On the second day we crossed the river to visit the colossi of Memnon and the tombs and temples of the western bank. The modern name of the kings' tombs is Bab-el-Mulûk, signifying the "gates of the kings." The gate of the kings ! What an appropriate title ! For none but kings entered therein, and it opened to them only when dead.

The Libyan range is just two miles from the Nile. At this point a ravine opens in the range of hills to the width of about two hundred feet. When we enter it we find ourselves in the most desolate, dreary, forbidding, barren, stony region in the world. Not a blade of grass, no, not one, nor shrub, nor any green thing is visible ; it is brown limestone rising in strata

from the bottom of the ravine to the summit of the hill on either side, while the base is covered with *débris*, great rocks crumbling or crumbled, over which the sun pours his fiercest every day throughout the year. We follow its crooked course for a mile and a half, until we are halted by a cross hill, which bars all further progress. It is a *cul de sac.* Here are the tombs of the kings, of which so far only twenty-one have been opened ; each is a palace chiselled out of the solid rock, and stuccoed and painted all over. There are forty-seven of them in this valley, but twenty-six of them remain undiscovered, where it may be supposed kings still lie, "every one in his own house." Keen-sighted, knowing travellers have been here, Belzoni among the keenest, yet there are twenty-six still undiscovered, which is, perhaps, all the better for the great dead who still lie there.

Sir Gardiner Wilkinson, for the better description of them, has numbered them in red paint, respectively from 1 to 21.

No. 17 was discovered by Belzoni, and is the most superb of all, for the spaciousness of the halls within and the exquisite paintings which adorn its walls. These paintings generally treat of religious subjects, of the death of kings and the transmigration of souls through various stages. One particular king, Setti I., father of Rameses the Great, is recognised in all these sets of paintings. He is represented offering sacrifice to Osiris and Isis, and as being judged by Osiris, while the goddess of truth and justice stands

by. In another place he is seen accepted by Osiris, who holds out his sceptre towards him as Ahasuerus is said to have done to Esther his queen. One hall to the right at the furthest end is not quite completed. We can trace a pencilling of red, with another of black over it, as if a master artist had superintended the work. The outlines are bold and masterful, and they have not all that stiffness which the skeleton drawing of Sir Gardiner would lead one to believe, and the paintings present Egyptian dress most vividly. We could almost tell of what those rich raiments in which the figures are painted were made of. The tomb penetrates 320 feet into the rock, and over wall and ceiling of both passage and hall is placed the smooth adamantine stucco, which has retained the paintings for over three thousand years.

Tomb No. 11 is called the Harper's tomb, from the figure of a harper which is seen at the extreme chamber to the right of the passage. This also is painted with interesting subjects. The monarch for whom this tomb was constructed is Rameses III. It is 405 feet in length, and arranged in halls like No. 17, but does not descend so abruptly into the ground.

Tomb No. 6 is also highly interesting, though not so well preserved as the two above mentioned. The subjects of the paintings are of a widely different character, but though fresher, do not exhibit equal skill or taste to those of Nos. 17 and 11. On the right of the entrance passage is a section of the wall devoted to the illustration of generation and gestation,

which prove the ancient Egyptians to have been far behind the moderns in human anatomy. On the wall behind the sarcophagus a youthful Adonis is depicted seated on a globe, and according to Sir Gardiner, who is learned in Egyptology, it is thought to refer to the theory that dissolution is followed by reproduction into life.

Tomb No. 2, generally reputed to be the most elegant of the tombs, was open during the time of the Greeks in Egypt, and numerous are the inscriptions on the walls of eminent Greek and Roman visitors. It descends on an incline of 1 foot in 10 feet. Two horses abreast might travel to the furthest end of the tomb safely at a hand gallop. A most beautiful sarcophagus of red granite is found at the end of the tomb, a little frayed on one side by the rapacious hands of souvenir gatherers. This tomb is the great resort for those who wish to lunch after visiting the four best specimens of kings' sepulchres which are all that the unlearned would care to visit.

"By the life of Pharaoh," those ancient Egyptians were giants. Continual visits during a Nile voyage into their tombs and temples stamp a clearer idea of them on the mind than all the books that could be read, and one feels a growing respect and admiration for all things Egyptian, notwithstanding the terrible aspect of frowning colossi, or the dread look of Pharaoh as he remorselessly smites his captives.

From the royal abodes of death—this Tophet of a valley—travellers generally hasten to visit the cata-

combs of Asasif. Sir Gardiner praises one of them most enthusiastically, because it is 862 feet long, and has many chambers and great halls; but since his time the Arab miners have destroyed the finest portions of it, so that it is actually not worth visiting, besides the strong currents of mephitic odour which issue out are sufficient to destroy all interest. Neither are the tombs of Abd el Kûrnah interesting. The paintings alone at No. 35 will repay a visit.

Nor will the ordinary tourist be detained by the small temples of Dêr el Bahri and Dêr el Medîneh, when other portions of Thebes more important deserve attention.

The Ramesseum or Memnonium lies directly below the grottoes of Kûrnah. Though in a most ruinous state, with but the portico and propylæ standing, the Ramesseum is a favourite with all visitors. All admire the bell-formed or lotus flower capitals, as well as the columns of the portico. The sculpture is fine and is in better proportion to the size of the portico. From a distance the Ramesseum looks as imposing as any building in Egypt. One reason for this is that its ruins, its portico, its propylæ, is much higher than the reddish mounds of *débris* which always are found in the vicinity of Egyptian temples. The real grandeur and charm of the temple ruins of Egypt are obscured by these mounds, which in many instances, such as before Denderah and Abydos, rise higher than the ruins themselves.

This temple palace was 600 feet in length from

portico to circuit wall, by 180 feet in breadth, but the larger part of it is in too ruinous a state to enter into details.

Before the portico lie the ruins of the largest statue in Egypt, of 887 tons in weight! It is a monster statue of syenite granite polished as smooth as a mirror. The destructive hands of the Arabs have been laid upon this also, for they have constructed millstones from the face, so that this heroic statue was not even respected when low. Iron-hearted Cambyses smote it at the legs and levelled it from its pedestal to the dust, but pagan Arabs with chisel and hammer defaced it.

From the Ramesseum to the colossi of Memnon is a little over a mile. In the shadow of the famous statues we repeat to ourselves the sweet tradition which fable has woven about them. There are two great figures seated on thrones about fifteen paces apart, looking eastward, but there is only one vocal Memnon, which is the northernmost or the one nearest the Ramesseum. The story goes that every morning at sunrise a sound issued from it similar to the breaking of a harp string. Strabo, whose curiosity must have prompted him to rise early to satisfy it, says that he heard a sound, but whether it proceeded from the statue or from some one in the crowd—for there were curious people in Thebes itself—he was not certain. But there were not wanting those who affirmed stoutly that the sound emanated from Memnon each morning as the sun

touched its lips. "Oh, sweet story; oh, romantic fable." It prompts us to look kindly at Memnon, wishful that it were true. What a charm there is in a well-devised story! The lips, eyes, and the points of Memnon's feet have been destroyed. Its entire body was also broken in pieces by the mad Persian who was the scourge of Egypt, but Severus restored it with huge blocks of sandstone chiselled in the form of the deity we see to-day.

To climb to the lap of Memnon is a labour even to active young men; but what young student would not do it, so that he could say he had sat in great Memnon's lap? When a traveller visits Versailles or the Trianon he must sit in the chair of Napoleon or Josephine. When he visits the royal palace at Madrid he must needs throw himself into the chair of Philip IV., or test the luxury of Isabella's couch. How much greater is the honour of having sat in the lap of Memnon, the dutiful son of the morning!

The temple of Medinet Habû is undoubtedly one of the most graceful and artistic in Egypt. Battle scenes and victories are engraved three inches deep on the walls of this temple. Scribes reckon up the hands of the slain and deliver the number to the king, who is seated on the hinder part of a chariot; a king of colossal stature has a host of men by the hair of the head, whom he is about to smite to death; then he rides in a chariot of state, surrounded by his nobles, and offers sacrifices to the gods after his victory over foreign enemies.

An Egyptian king erected it some seven hundred years before Christ. An Egyptian Pharaoh usurped the throne and had his own figure sculptured over the former. Nectanebo II. effaced Tirhakah's name and introduced his own instead; and succeeding Ptolemies and Cleopatras have inscribed theirs among their predecessors, and so on the work was continued, until Egypt ceased to have a king. Invading Arabs first commenced the work of ruin, Coptic Christians completed it.

A pylon of granite, flanked by two pyramidal towers, two succeeding great courts and a noble hall of assembly, admit us into the holy of holies, the nayos and adyta. The second court is by far the grandest within the temple. It measures 123 feet by 133, and is surrounded by a peristyle of noble pillars of varied design. Corinthian pillars of a Christian church stand here before noble Osirides and circular bell-topped Egyptian columns. The Christians erected their church in this area and framed their pillars out of the solid architraves, which they removed from their place for that purpose. It is tempting, one is well aware, to have such abundant means at hand for the erection of a church to God; but the area had sufficed more than enough had they but left it in its place. One good thing, however, came of this spoliation of a fine temple—much of the original colouring and newness of the corridor behind the church is preserved for the unqualified admiration of all lovers of art.

The queens' tombs are really not worth visiting after those of the kings ; for fire and smoke have so robbed them of their former beauty that disappointment is sure to follow a visit to them. However, those who have plenty of time will do well to see everything. Besides the temples above mentioned there are two others south of Medinet Habû which fall under the same conditions. The area of the Stygian Lake may still be easily traced from the propylæ of Medinet Habû, but I am not certain that it would repay travelling around its vast extent.

Thus I have done Thebes somewhat hurriedly, it is true, but still I have gone over it. Travellers, no doubt, may wish to purchase mummies and other souvenirs here. If they but express a wish to buy, mummies by the wholesale, whole mummies, heads of mummies, hands, feet, limbs and trunks of mummies ; human, animal, and bird mummies will be offered to them, until they will imagine that the vendors of them are themselves resurrected mummies.

"Want a mummy, sir?" "'Tis a beautiful head, sir ; look at the teeth, the eyes, ears and hair." "'Tis a capital mummy, sir. There's a nice foot, sir ; a child's foot, a boy's foot, a woman's foot, a girl's foot. Will you buy, sir? Buy mummies?" This is the song of mummy pedlars. The sellers of the mummies are round us everywhere wherever we go, crying aloud their ghastly wares, pestering us as long as we stay in Thebes.

The following is an inventory of articles purchased

by a gentleman in the portico of the Ramesseum and before the tombs of the kings:—"Three men's heads, one woman's head, one child's head, six hands large and small, twelve feet, one plump infant's foot, one foot minus a toe, two ears, one part of a well-preserved face, two ibis mummies, one dog mummy."

As for images and scarabs, they are countless. Oh, certainly Thebes is the place to buy souvenirs; such that will make timid women pale and innocent children cry; such that will make old people think of their graves and Atheists thoughtful.

The genial sun just touched the lips of Memnon and his mate as we left Luxor next morning. Ah, those two colossi sitting complacently on the plain of Thebes will surely haunt the memory! For ever, while we live, if we think of Egypt, our minds will revert to those two statues, which have sat like guardian watchers of the land for over forty centuries. The overflowing Nile, at which they seem to be always gazing, lays each year its tribute at their feet. 'Tis they who have seen the sun first of all in that plain, yet never have they seen it set. They have seen countless generations come and go; still they sit, ever silent and ever in motionless majesty.

CHAPTER VIII.

From Thebes to Philæ.

Cairo, *January 1th*, 1870.

From Thebes to Erment takes two hours by steamer.

The guide-book speaks of a temple at Hermonthis or Erment, which was built by Cleopatra. We had a glimpse of it. But were it not for its associations with the serpent of old Nile, who would visit it, fresh from the precincts of Karnak, from the Ramesseum and Medinet Habû with strong recollections of royal Luxor and the varied beauties of Thebes? A fairer enjoyment than visiting a small ruined temple may be had in the cool gardens of the Khedive. To travel through orange groves and forests of lemon and citron trees, through avenues of tamarisk and sycamore and acacias, fringed with rose bushes in bloom, to pluck a ripe mandarin and eat it in the cool shade, is exquisite enjoyment, particularly at Erment on the Nile. Erment will be remembered as one of nature's sweetest pictures, framed by ruins of glorious temples.

Esne or Latopolis is fifteen kilometres south of Erment. It boasts the ruins of a quay and a most perfect portico, supported by 24 columns, no two of which have the same capitals. In these columns, the work of a late period, we see that the Egyptians made an effort to break from the conventional form

of columnar architecture. The capitals are exquisitely cut, and out of so many designs of capitals you could hardly say which was best. They are all graceful, but, perhaps, the palm-branched capital, or the delicate corn-sheaf, will be most admired for their elegance. The columns are circular, but their capitals represent the lotus flower, the papyrus flower, water reeds, sheaves of wheat, clover and date palm branches.

Thirty years ago this portico was buried in rubbish, but Mohammed Ali, while visiting it in the year 1841, was so struck with the beauty of the capitals that he ordered it to be cleared to the floor, in which state it is now preserved and carefully protected from future depredations of Arabs. It is a pity that Ismail Pacha did not follow the example of his great predecessor oftener, and have other fine remnants of temples restored to the light of day. For one thing, however, travellers are indebted to the Egyptian Government, viz., for the protection which they derive by the presence of Turkish guards from the devouring avarice of Arab beggars for "bakshish." Let the traveller be careful of his cash, think of others who are coming after him, and not render the Nile voyage a laborious task by an indiscriminate and senseless generosity.

After staying two hours at Esneh the steamer started again up the Nile for Edfû, which place was reached the next morning at eight o'clock.

The great temple of Edfû is a gem. As we stand

before the front of the temple the pyramidal towers and pylon rise imposingly above us. With the exception of the fillet of the cornice, the propylæ are as perfect as when the rites and ceremonies of the Egyptian worship were daily practised. The rounded, hawser-like torus which runs up the corners of the propylæ and seem to bind the stones, the space in the walls for the lofty flagstaffs, the embrasures through which the fastenings were put, the loopholes in successive lines through which the garrison shot their arrows and which admitted light into their quarters, or to the chambers of the priests, the pylon between the propylæ with its immense portal surmounted by the winged globe which protectingly expands along the lintel of the door—all are perfect and entire. Truly the Edfû temple is like a phœnix risen from its ashes.

When entering the gateway of the temple its ponderous lintel is fifty feet above our heads. The sunken part of the walls which we see on each side were to admit the half doors as they swung open. We may still see how the doors—or gates, rather—were supported.

Passing through the portal, which is forty feet deep, a spacious arena, measuring 180 feet long by 140 feet wide, opens before us, having a covered corridor on each side supported by thirty-two columns. In each inner wall of the propylæ a door permits entrance into their interior, and the ascent to the summit is easy by winding flights of low stone stairs. The stairs are lit up by the loopholes which were

observed from the outside, but though they appeared small enough then, when inside we see that they would readily admit the body of a man for observation and for defensive purposes. The walls are of immense thickness, and every part of the tower is of the most solid construction. At the head of each flight of stairs are spacious rooms, either lighted by the loop-holes from the outside or from the inside, for these towers were so built that if even the pylon was forced the propylæ could be defended against those within the temple as well as those without.

A splendid prospect over the Libyan and Arabian deserts and the Nile valley is to be obtained from the summit, while the entire body of the temple is seen behind the propylæ, like an immense bastion or buttress.

Descending into the vestibulum again, and proceeding with the examination of the temple, we cross the noble corridor and enter the pronaos or portico, supported by eighteen elegant columns, in three rows, the front row of which is connected by low inter-columnar screens. Passing through this we are in a hall immediately before the sanctum sanctorum, in which is a safe of beautiful polished red granite, topped like a pyramid, twelve feet high, eight feet in breadth and six in depth, the whole of which is formed of one block. This safe, I call it, probably kept the sacred vessels or the image of Horus, who was the deity of the city of Apollinopolis, which once stood about the temple.

On each side and rear of it runs a lofty passage which admits entrance into the several adyta. In the furthermost chambers to the right and the left are apertures in the walls which lead into labyrinthian crypts. In these crypts, we see niches sunk in the walls, and tomb-like cavities at either end. The sandstone lining of these crypts, having been always free from rubbish and dust, is in as perfect a state as though taken yesterday from the quarry.

Stairs lead to the roof of the temple from chambers to the right and left of the portico, on one side by a flight of a hundred stone steps on an inclined plane, on the other side by successive short flights. The roof is remarkably solid, and communication is easy with all parts of it.

Every part of the exterior and interior is covered with sculptural inscriptions—colossal, medium, and minute—which represent the usual number of winged snakes, phœnixes, emblematical images of souls in their transition to the several states after death. The Zodiac is found on the ceiling of the portico ; human and animal sacrifices are represented on the left circuit wall, and there are boats and mummies in endless procession.

The temple is said to have been built by Ptolemy Philometer, in the year 384 B.C. to Horus, who is emblematised as a winged globe throughout all the temples of Egypt. From the inner wall of the propylæ to the rear circuit wall it measures 143 paces, or about 430 feet, by about 130 feet in width. We

may traverse round the circuit wall and through every part of the temple without any difficulty, for M. Mariette has done his work well at this place. He even had the floor of every pavilion swept, and had a flight of steps built for the convenience of visitors to lead from the village to the pylon.

Between Edfû and Philæ there is nothing very interesting. The sandstone quarries at Silsilis and the ruins of Ombos may delay the traveller a short while. We but stopped for the purpose of inspecting the quarries, whence the large blocks were obtained for the building of the Egyptian temples. The Nile at Silsilis is contracted to the width of about 1000 feet by the approach of the Arabian and Libyan range to the water's edge, but it soon widens again, and is bounded once more by fertile strips and expanses until Assûan is reached.

Assûan, the ancient Syene, lies about five hours south of Ombos, and beyond Assûan, an hour's journey by camel, lies Philæ, which is to be the terminus of our voyage.

The town of Assûan is built of adobe bricks, and is said to have a population of about ten thousand souls, consisting of Turks, Arabs, Nubians, Berbers, and Abyssinians. The Arab element, however, predominates ; but opposite the town, 100 paces off, lies the Isle of Elephantia, whose entire population is Nubian.

Herodotus journeyed no further than this when he ascended the Nile with the view of attempting to find its sources, for he had been told by the inhabitants of

Sais that the Nile issued from the two mountains called Crophi and Mophi, and divided itself into two rivers, one of which poured into Ethiopia, the other into Egypt.

To Syene, now called Assûan, Juvenal was banished for his satires against the upper-tendom of Rome in the reign of Domitian. Syene supplied the blocks from which the columns of Rameses, the obelisks at the Place de la Concorde, at Rome, Karnak, and Heliopolis, were fashioned. An obelisk lies in the quarry yet, but, through a defect in it, it was not removed from its birthplace. It would have been 95 feet high and 10 feet square. As it lies, however, one can better appreciate the skill of the Egyptians, their patience and indomitable industry, and an examination of these extensive red granite quarries of Syene will give more information of how their gigantic works were done than of any number of books upon the subject.

The quarries are not deep—at no place are they over 100 feet—but they extend over several miles, and the chips lie scattered on the ground, and the marks of the chisel and the figures in granite are as fresh as if the Egyptians had but quitted their work for a holiday. There are enough blocks, great and small, lying about loose, out of which a respectable-sized town might be built, but the quarries are exhaustless. Great hills of granite crop up in many directions, and blocks of granite lie heaped one upon another, assuming the most fantastic shapes.

Three miles above the Isle of Elephantia is the first cataract, caused by the masses of granite which rise in an almost unbroken line clear across the river. Beyond the cataract, surrounded by many bizarre hills of granite, lies the lovely Isle of Philæ, on which stand a lengthy row of ruined temples and colonnades, intersected by thin lines and clumps of feathery palms.

The situation of Philæ is most romantic as it lies dreamily amidst smooth, placid lakelets, shadowed by palms and temples. The legends connected with it are also romantic. According to one, the "Holy One of Egypt" lies buried in the cataract, and it is his spirit which disturbs the waters. To Osiris the Isle of Philæ was consecrated ; to Isis, his wife and sister, and to their son Horus, the temples were dedicated.

A long time ago this isle attracted all Egyptian eyes and hearts. They came in long processions of devotees, in gorgeous caïques, with music and varicoloured streamers ; they made the Nile and Philæ's rocks melodious with their songs and music ; the river saw happy human life gladden its waters, as the people sailed upwards to offer at the shrine of the Blessed Triad. With these legends brimming over with sweet romance in the mind, the traveller looks at Philæ with kindly eye, never with that of a critic ; for though the temples covering its surface are Egyptian in style, yet they are as inferior to the older and more stupendous temples as the work of an apprentice is to that of his master. Greek art was

in its zenith when the foundation stone of Isis' temples was laid ; Greek visitors from Athens and Corinth were frequent in Egypt ; a mutual trade was prospering between Egypt and Greece. It was but likely, then, that the Egyptians, upon seeing that the tendency of Greek art was to imitate nature, and perceiving the beautiful effect of the Corinthian capital, proceeded upon the same principle ; but in this the Egyptians speedily exceeded the bounds of good taste. No tree nor plant flourished in Egypt but what became a model for the sculptor, and the effect of all this is noticeable in the incongruity and unsymmetrical appearance of the temples of Philæ.

The ruins of Philæ consist of the temple of Isis, almost intact, with architrave, cornice, torus, pylon and propylæ, chambers, cells, crypts still uninjured, and two or three pylons and remnants of temples. There is a rectangular area in front of the temple of Isis, with a corridor on one side supported by sixteen columns, and another on the other side supported by thirty columns.

To the east of this grand temple is a small peripteral temple, very elegant ; below that is a quay constructed of sandstone, which in ancient days ran round the island. On each side of the temple of Isis there are found several remnants of pylonæ, walls, and chapels.

Travellers by steamer ascend no higher than Assûan ; so having seen all that was worthy to be seen in the time allotted to us, on the eighteenth day

of our departure from Cairo our return voyage was commenced, where, on the evening of the 23rd, we arrived, after having enjoyed twenty-three days of most exquisite pleasure, unmarred by a single adverse incident. I might dwell longer upon the calm divine days of Egypt, upon the beauties of the remarkable river, upon the dreamy panorama of its banks, and very many other things of interest; but I have already exceeded my page and dare not task the editor's patience; but to those who wish to be wise, to be healthful, to borrow one month of real pleasure from a serious life, I would say, come and see the Nile.

JERUSALEM.

CHAPTER IX.

Exploration of Underground Jerusalem.

Jerusalem, *January 18th*, 1890.

At a meeting held at Willis's Rooms, London, on the 22nd of June last year, the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of London, Lord Strangford, Mr. Layard of Nineveh, Dean Stanley, the Dean of Canterbury, Sir Roderick Murchison, Mr. Gifford Palgrave the traveller, Professor Owen, the Rev. H. B. Tristram, and Mr. Gilbert Scott organised a society whose object was to be the investigation of the archæology, topography, geology, natural history, the manners and customs of Palestine, and the locating of the Temple and other sacred places in and around ancient Jerusalem.

The objects of the society were cordially supported by thousands of sympathetic Bible readers, and a Palestine Exploration Fund was formed.

Towards the end of the year, an expedition consisting of Captain Charles Wilson and Lieutenant

Anderson, of the Royal Engineers, was sent out with instructions to survey the land of Palestine from Gaza to Syria. These two gentlemen travelled over the whole country, and at the end of six months they drew up a series of maps on the scale of one mile to the inch of every portion of the country, from the wild deserts of Paran south, to Syria and Lebanon on the north, and from Arabia and the Ammonite Land east to the Great Sea, inclusive of the Lakes Gennesareth and Asphaltites, and the waters of Merom. They carefully located every town and village in Palestine, and whenever possible gave the Biblical name, and we have now a fairly correct chart of Palestine.

Among other duties they collected materials for making about fifty plans, with detailed drawings of churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, tombs, etc.; they transcribed all kinds of characters, whether Phœnician, Cufic, Assyrian, Egyptian, Jewish, or Arabic they discovered during their explorations; and after patient examination of several ruins of the ancient synagogues, "ascertained, with a degree of probability never before arrived at," the sites of Capernaum and Chorazin. The system of irrigation formerly used on the Plain of Gennesareth had also been discovered, and while excavating the Tels of the Damascus Plain, at Kadesh Barnea, and the Holy Rock of Gerizim, were rewarded by many interesting disclosures respecting the ancient inhabitants.

But these labours, though invaluable to Bible students, are considered but as being preliminary to the special work which was designed by the Society. In November, 1866, Lieutenant (now Captain) Charles Warren of the Royal Engineers, accompanied by Sergeant Birtles and Corporal Phillips of the same corps, left England for Jerusalem to explore that city, and to discover if possible, from beneath the *débris* around it, the plan of the ancient city of Jerusalem.

My principal object in coming here was to understand what success Captain Warren had obtained during his laborious excavations. I propose to preface my first impressions of Jerusalem by a brief account of my journey to the Holy City.

Jaffa, or old Joppa, and its harbour do not differ much to-day from what they must have appeared in the days of Josephus. The learned Jewish historian describes the harbour "as not naturally a haven, for it ends in a rough shore, where all the rest of it is straight, but the two ends bend towards each other, where there are deep precipices, and great stones that jut out into the sea, and wherewith the chains by which Andromeda was bound have left their marks, which attest to the antiquity of that fable."

The modern town of Jaffa stands on an eminence to whose slopes the houses appear to cling like a cluster of grey snail shells, on account of the colour of the stone wherewith they are built. There is no harbour for ships, but boats find refuge in a natural cleft in the reefs which rise a few feet above the

surface of the water. The line of shore on each side of the town is a straight low beach, which is green, to the northward, with vigorous vegetation, while to the south it is white with sands which extend in long lines from Gaza and Ascalon, while the hill upon which the town of Jaffa is built bulges out into the sea, and has its extreme point among the reefs, where a few boats and fishing luggers lie harboured in shallow water.

Jaffa is the port where the rafts of timber from Tyre were received for the building of the Temple. It is the haven whence Jonah started on the voyage during which his luckless fate ordered that he should be cast into the sea.

Every fortnight the steamers of the "Messageries Impériales," the Austrian "Lloyd's," and the Russian Steam Navigation Company, arrive before the town to discharge their pilgrim passengers, and anchor at all seasons except in very rough weather a few cables off the outer reefs. The charges for landing are considerable, the boatmen, if the weather is very boisterous, charging no less that five dollars per head for rowing a pilgrim ashore.

The landing is often extremely exciting, not to say perilous. But mishaps, though possible, occur but seldom. Once with a foot upon the Jaffa pavement the pilgrim might be forgiven for mistaking the intentions of the bawling rabble of the town. They have a habit of rushing towards the newcomer and screaming hoarsely their readiness to perform any

duty he might require, such as carrying his luggage to the Custom House, which is exactly five yards from the place where he landed, or guiding him to a nice hotel, a donkey, or a dragoman.

But there is a virtue in calmness. When the pilgrim quietly tells his boatman to carry his luggage, the mob become silent, and a trifling "bakshish" to the Custom House officer prevents the Turk from rumpling clean shirts and silk neckties. Then through the awkwardly laid-out streets, and over the clumsy pavements which are frayed by the wear and tear of centuries, the way lies to the hotel "City of Jerusalem" in the northern suburb of Jaffa.

To this part of the town, some three years ago, there came, under a man named Adams, about 150 pious folk from Maine and Chicago, to settle as harbingers of the Jews' return to Canaan.

It seems that America is not alone in having foolish people. England has been also represented by a colony of fanatics under one Gregory, which has also proved a failure; then came a German colony of similar character, which appears to be more enterprising than either of the preceding two, for the Germans have possessed themselves of all the American and English houses, and have erected a church and an hotel. It was in this hotel named "City of Jerusalem" wherein we found pleasant quarters before setting out for the Holy City.

Pilgrims travel to Jerusalem according to their purses and luggage. If a pilgrim is compelled to be

economical, he will content himself with his staff and knapsack, and walk the distance of thirty-four miles which lies between Jaffa and Jerusalem, stopping for a night's rest at Ramleh Convent, twelve miles from Jaffa. But if he has sufficient means he will hire horses, and a dragoman to act as interpreter and general servant, and in a few hours he may reach the Holy City without experiencing the least discomfort or annoyance.

After a brief stay of two hours at Jaffa—during which we paid a hasty visit to the house which tradition has assigned to Simon the tanner, and the locality where Napoleon murdered 2500 unarmed prisoners, who surrendered themselves upon the word of his officers that they should go free—I left for Jerusalem.

The fertility of the soil around Jaffa is equal to that of Egypt, and its orange groves rival those of Valencia. The ground between the fruit trees is covered with vegetables, and the lemon and citron groves hang out their fruit far over the stone fences and briar hedges, and form long lines of crimson as viewed from a distance. When the sunshine brightens up the gold of the luxuriant fruit and vivid green leaves of the groves which are on each side, and the sound of the streams of water falling from the fountains breaks on the ear, the traveller just issuing from the filthy lanes of Jaffa and the smell of its garbage heaps will be tempted to exclaim that if all Canaan presented such a blooming aspect, then the

promise of the Lord to the patriarchs that He would bring their children to a "land flowing with milk and honey" must have been true. But the eager traveller hurrying to reach Jerusalem soon leaves behind this luxuriant tract with its gardens of pomegranates and oranges, with its vineyards and olive groves, and its fair glimpses of sea, and enters a plain which but for the mean vegetation that grows upon it would be a desert, with its light soil at the mercy of every breath of wind. The hardy grass and cactus which cover it retain moisture sufficient to bind it until it has the complexion of rich soil, and from a distance the eye roving over its extensive hollows and dunes and level tracts, could not distinguish between it and a piece of prairie land. This portion of the plain is the continuation of the Plain of Philistia, bordering upon Sharon.

There is no natural boundary between Sharon and Philistia. Ephraim lay north of that line running due east from Jaffa to the mountainous territories of Benjamin and of Judah, Dan occupied the plain from Ephraim down to Ascalon, and southward of Dan on the same plain to Beersheba was Simeon. But it was the unhappy fate of the Jews to have their broad plains ravaged frequently by the Philistines, and they became known in time as the Plain of Philistia. Still there was always a distinction and a boundary between Philistia and Sharon, for a river, now dry divided them.

It is through the Plain of Sharon extending from

the sea to the base of that span of mountains stretching from Bethshemesh to Carmel, called the mountains of Ephraim, that the pilgrim route to Jerusalem lies. Within this area stood many famous walled cities. From one of the eminences in the plain one might see the towns of Joppa, Ludd, Ajalon, Arimathea, Timnath, perhaps the towers of Bethshemesh, while the mountains of Ephraim rose like a blue wall to the east. Sharon was excellent for its pastures and running waters, while Philistia to the south was famed for its cornfields, and its plenty. We are reminded of the Shunamite woman who went with her family to reside there during the year of famine, and how the cunning Samson destroyed the corn of the Philistines by his ingenious stratagem with the foxes. "I am the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valleys," sings Solomon, for along the banks of the stream during those days bloomed the lily and the rose.

The aspect of Sharon is greatly changed since the reign of Solomon. The black tents of Kedar which looked so "comely" then, may be yet seen from almost every hill-top squatting low in the green vales, as we journey towards Jerusalem, and the Bedouin flocks feed on their sweet grasses. Solitary trees dot the levels and the hill-slopes, but there are no towers of Israel or of Philistia to be seen; there are no mighty cities strong in their warriors, nor fortresses of Dan guarding the plain.

Ramleh — "sandy tract" — stands midway on

Sharon plain, about three hours' ride from Jaffa. It is a small village with barely anything of note, but is interesting from the fact that at this place the traveller first sees the peculiar Palestinian houses. These are of an uniform colour, like so many tiny four square castlets, so closely packed, that between them there seem to be no openings for streets. As wood is dear and very scarce, no rafters are used, so the roofs rise in a multitude of little domes, and the appearance of a village of this character crowning a hill is very curious, and suggests an unusually big mosque of the Cordovan type. The material for the structures is the grey limestone rock of the country which crops up bare and grey upon every elevation above the soil, and which the weather has coloured in harmony with the rocks around, and streaked with the dark-brown moss with which every outcropping stone is marked.

After passing a tall tower of Saracenic architecture with numerous white tombs in its vicinity, we emerged from a forest of olive-trees, and in a few minutes stood before the walls of Ramleh. But we were not allowed to enter in peace, for the lepers were outside in groups of hideous, disgusting blotches upon the face of the land. A smart ride of three hours had given me an appetite, but the sight of the wretched people, with their brilliant eyes peeping out of swollen, bleached, and dead flesh, lips curving in all directions but the natural way, and long untidy locks of hair, suddenly coming upon me and holding out

fingerless hands for "bakshish," took away all desire for food.

There is no hotel or inn at Ramleh, but rooms and clean beds as well as forage may be found at the Franciscan convent, for which the monks who live there expect a gratuity according to the means of the pilgrim, and equivalent to that which the landlord of an Eastern inn would charge for the same accommodation and services. The fare is rough, but plentiful; equal to any that one might expect in a second-rate hotel "out West," and consists invariably of bread and wine, beans, scones, mutton or beef and potatoes, roast chickens, pudding, fruit, and nuts. For such fare, and a room for self and dragoman, besides stabling and forage for our horses, my gratuity amounted to one dollar and a quarter.

From Ramleh the road to Jerusalem continues for three hours more across the grassy plain of Sharon. It was constructed through the influence of one of the American colony at Jaffa. It has a breadth of twenty feet, is walled up on each side wherever rain might injure it, and whenever it crosses a small gully or torrent, a good bridge spans the bed. It is patrolled night and day by Turkish soldiers.

An hour's ride from Ramleh brought us to Beit Nubah, where traces of the Crusaders are found in the remains of the castle and the ruined Gothic church. From the hill a view is obtained of the valley of Ajalon, above which the moon was halted in its course through the heavens at Joshua's command

during his battle with the Amorites. It appears to be a grassy meadow land well stocked with cattle; olive-trees cover the hill-sides, young corn sprouts from the arable ground, while many a yoke of oxen is seen drawing the plough over the fields.

The road leads thence over a succession of rising hills, towards the hills of Ephraim, which after an hour's march become plain and distinct, and disclose a long range of numberless rounded mountain tops, whereon the children of Dan in olden times built their fortresses.

We stopped to breathe our horses upon the summit of the Ephraim range at a town called Abu Ghansh, or Kuryet-el-Anab. The name Abu Ghansh is after a famous robber who dwelt among the lonely defiles in this vicinity about fifty years ago, and this little mountain village of Kuryet-el-Anab occupies the site of Kirjath-jearim, a city of the Gibeonites which stood on the border of Benjamin and Judah. Sometimes it was called Baal of Judah or Kirjath-Baal; to this little mountain village the ark was brought after the calamity at Bethshemesh, and the Prophet Urijah, put to death by Jehoiakim, was a resident of it.

It is almost incredible that a small village of this kind should be of such remote antiquity. The half ruined Latin church of the Crusaders and the small square stone houses give no indications of it. The approach from Beit Nubah, which follows a long, winding ravine, possesses nothing of interest. The

wall-like slopes of the hills, so thinly covered with earth, tufted herbage, dwarf shrubs, and scrubby olive-trees, tell one nothing. There is no tree of any great age except half-a-dozen tamarinds and tamarisks, and these certainly are anything but venerable in appearance. Here and there as we journey along we may note ancient-looking caves; but those which are not half closed by loose fallen earth are blackened from late fires of pilgrims.

Having reached the mountains, the road to Jerusalem is observed to wind itself over their tops, dipping down into rocky valleys, and ascending again to the heights of Judah. An old ruin to the left, whence a view may be obtained of the Dead Sea and of the Mediterranean, is pointed out as the tomb of Samuel, and a village snugly folded round about by terraced hills, clothed with groves of green olives, is confidently pointed out to us as the birthplace of John the Baptist.

Another half-hour's smart riding brought us within sight of a far distant blue range to the east, which was said to be the mountains of Moab. The ground now becomes more rocky, and the outcroppings of rock with their naked and fissured crowns darkened and streaked with mossy lines and patches, seem to me to present the very first specimens of real antiquity hitherto visible. While we ride on, wondering at the ravages of numberless rainy seasons on the face of the land, the eye presently catches a view of large buildings and isolated cottages, then glimpses of

battlemented walls, with a mass of houses beyond, and finally we see a walled town.

"There is Jerusalem!" exclaims the guide.

"Jerusalem?" we echo.

"Yes, Jerusalem," responds the guide.

And this is Jerusalem which we see at the distance of a mile from us! This mass of masonry on the brow of a hill, half hidden by those barrack-like buildings and groups of dead walls and modern cottages, with bits of wretched battlemented wall appearing at intervals, and enclosing those uninteresting houses beyond? Oh!

But what could anyone expect of a city battered and beaten down so frequently within the course of twenty centuries, of a city razed and burnt down oftener than any other known city in the world, of a city which from its beginning was fated to destruction? Yet who, cradled to the sound of Christian prayers, educated by Christian parents, preached to all his life by Christian pastors, would not have expected the impossible in regard to Jerusalem? Rocks and walls, mountains and valleys, should have been speaking witnesses of its sublime interest, the disappointed Christian pilgrim says. But instead of these he arrives at the Jaffa Gate of the town, and he hears the words, "Tower of David overlooking Jaffa Gate," "Vale of Gihon to the right," and "there is the Upper Pool of Gihon," mingled in strange contrast with a request in Turkish that he would open his baggage for the inspection of the Custom House authorities.

On passing through the gate, the pilgrim finds himself at the base of the Tower of David, with Zion Hill to his right; he goes down a steep street which is called the Via Dolorosa, bustled by whimsical-looking Jews in the oddest kind of clothes and hats, and elbowed by eccentric Russians, and while he is considering the garb and nationality of the divers other ill-dressed and bizarre passers-by who come toiling up by him, he is twitched at the sleeve by his guide, who wants to point out to him the place where our Saviour indented a wall with His elbow as He struggled under His heavy cross; and if he peeps in at the shop windows, amid a host of cheap Jack wares he will see a cross of mother-of-pearl with the figure of a nude Jesus stretched upon it, surmounted by the letters I.N.R.I., or of a Holy Bible bound in an olive wood cover; or while looking at a church which he sees to his left, his guide will perhaps tell him it is the Holy Sepulchre! But though rather bewildered with the multitude of sacred names which he hears, and surprised at the number of holy places around him, before he arrives at his hotel he will begin to realise that this is indeed the Jerusalem which he came to see, that this is indeed to the Christian the most sacred of sacred places in the world.

The confusion in his mind may be imagined but not described. Biblical associations will begin to assert their charm. What a variety of thoughts ranging between Abraham and Christ now crowd to recollection! What facts and incidents are remem-

bered! But upon the pilgrim's feelings that first night within the walls of the city of the great King, housed close to the Hill of Zion, and but a stone's throw of Calvary, let us drop the veil.

Modern Jerusalem is said to have a population of about 20,000. On entering it from the north by the Jaffa Gate, the "city" is sure to disappoint the stranger, but from the east and the south it presents a rather fine appearance.

As regarded from the east, say from Olivet, the city is seen to rest grandly upon the summit of three hills—Acra, Zion, and Moriah. As it sweeps from the last named hill towards Zion it overlooks the valley of Jehoshaphat. On the southern side is a deep cleft separating Zion from the hills which undulate towards Bethlehem. This cleft is Himmon Valley. Beyond Zion, Himmon Valley runs northward, when it becomes the Vale of Gihon, which, though deep and far below the brow of Zion, rises gradually upward and ends at the northernmost point of Jerusalem. To the north of the city lies the hill of Bezetha, overgrown with thick clusters of olive-trees on its eastern face, and between it and Scopus lies the valley of Jehoshaphat, and this valley also separates Moriah from Olivet, and at the foot of Olivet, we are told, is the Garden of Gethsemane, the tomb of the Virgin Mary, the splendid tombs of Absalom and Zachariah, and around these lie the countless graves of Jews who came from afar to die in Jerusalem. To the south-east, just below these

tombs, is the village of Siloam, and below the village the pools of Siloam and the Spring of Enrogel. Above, eastward, on the opposite side of Jehoshaphat's Valley, sweeping with rugged face towards your feet as you stand between Bethany and Jerusalem, is the Mount of Olives. To the right of Olivet is Scopus, to the left is a line of rounded hill-tops formed by the Mount of Offence and the Hill of Evil Counsel—the "mountains which are round about Jerusalem."

From Olivet you can see the hills well, and how they encompass the city like a chain of defensive heights. Southward is Mount St. Elias, descending smoothly towards Zion for the distance of a mile. Northward is Bezetha and Bireh ridge. Westward are Elias and Bezetha joined by a hilly spine of grey rock, and eastward stand Olivet and its sister mounts. Looking from Olivet towards Jerusalem encompassed by its hills, one realises the aptness of the verse, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about His people."

History, however, makes note of twenty sieges during which the Lord absented Himself from His people, when those bleak "mountains" were scaled by the feet of numberless enemies, and who, noon and eve, from the deep valleys and the heights around the city, mocked the cries of wounded combatants on the days of slaughter, and there was none to save.

One marvels that an insignificant city and a few bare hills can become so consecrated by fables and

tradition that at the sight hearts become softened and pride subdued, and yet it is impossible for a Christian to look upon the grey old walls and their surroundings without becoming sincerely affected.

For this is that city, and these those hills, of which our Bible speaks. Small and comparatively uninteresting is the aspect of the city, bleak and dreary are the hills, but the associations which cling to it and to them, impart to them an interest superior to all others. When the student of history permits his eyes to rove over the classic fanes of the Attic plain, or the majestic ruins of Rome, or the silent temples of Egypt, he is not affected in the same manner as the Christian who, from the summit of Olivet, looks down upon Jerusalem and its bordering hills.

The Moslem mosque, rising above its grand platform so conspicuously, the venerable ruins and grey battlemented blocks, the minarets, domes and towers of mosques and churches, interspersed with noble cypress and other green foliaged trees, need not excite more than a languid interest; but when we are told that yonder hill to the south-west is Zion; that the tower hard by is known as the Tower of David; that the gilt dome surmounted by the cross covers the tomb of Christ, and that Calvary is not far off; that the Mosque of Omar occupies the site of the Temple; that that Garden enclosed by a whitewashed wall at the base of the city is Gethsemane, of the night of Agony; that this hill called Olivet is that so often trodden by the feet of Christ,—what other scene in all

the world is so favoured with such grand associations?

If we enter the city by the Damascus Gate from the Hill of Bezetha, we see deep moats on either side of us. In many places they have been cut fathoms deep through the solid rock, which the weather has worn smooth, and which the *débris* of ages has half filled up. When Titus commenced operations from Scopus he caused this moat to be filled with the trunks of trees, and with the rocks picked up from the face of Bezetha.

Some fifty paces north from the Damascus Gate there is a huge cave-like indentation in the rock, a low house and an enclosure which is called the prison of Jeremiah the prophet. For a beshlik the hungry-looking porter allowed me to visit it, but I saw nothing save an artificial enlargement of a natural cave.

Another fifty paces east we see a small dark opening in the lower face of the wall. That small hole took me down below the modern city some hundreds of feet, and I groped my way by dim candle-light far into the interior through passages carved out of the solid limestone rock.

As from the Damascus Gate we look along the long wall westward, the sight of many projecting towers reminds us of the verse: "Go, count the towers thereof." Of all gates leading into the city, this is the best preserved. Its turrets and battlements of sad grey stone, and its numerous projections and

machicolations, are not unlike the front of an old castle of the feudal times.

The best features of modern Jerusalem appear to be grouped near the neighbourhood of the Damascus Gate. As we walk through the town, we find that almost every street is on an incline, and is paved with great round smooth stones, irregularly set, and which are a great discomfort to a tender-footed pedestrian.

Presently we come to a small square, from which leads a street more animated than any we had yet seen, lined on each side by miniature shops, in the front of which are the vendors. This is the central mart of the city, or bazaar, wherein are bought and sold the usual wares of Orientals—gums and spices, Indian shawls and Manchester prints, the gay cottons and other manufactures of the British Isles, besides broadcloth and Lyons silk.

In the next shop are hung cheap Jack wares of Birmingham and Sheffield—steel traps for rats and mice; pocket clasp-knives, metal whistles, and what not, cords for whips, harness and shoes, ropes, sack-cloth, linen, kerchiefs of Damascus, and Syrian Kefyiehs. In the bazaar we obtain also a good idea of the mixture of races at Jerusalem. For all countries between the Pacific and the Indian Sea have here a few representatives.

The bazaars and streets of Jerusalem are distinctive and are probably peculiar to Palestine, for they certainly differ from those in Damascus, Cairo, or

Stamboul. For these are covered with houses resting on arches. In many parts Jerusalem resembles an underground city. For a furlong at a time one may travel through a street entirely roofed over, while on each side by the dim light penetrating through openings in the roof, the people pursue their various trades and businesses.

Near the bazaar, we came to a venerable-looking Christian church of Byzantine architecture. In its flagged court, before the entrance door opening from Palmer Street, there were several dirty Russian pilgrims going from one stone column to another, and kissing them with fervour. On entering into the church we found several pilgrims of the same nationality continuing the kissing process, and crossing themselves devoutly. I observed the Turkish soldiers looking contemptuously at them. These soldiers have been found necessary to prevent the rival sects, Armenians, Roman Catholics and Copts, breaking out into open war among themselves.

In front of the door by which we enter, and just within the entrance hall, is a marble slab in the pavement surrounded by a brass railing. On it, we are informed, was laid the body of Jesus to be anointed after its descent from the cross. As soon as it was pointed out, the pilgrims rushed towards it and kissed it rapturously.

From the entrance hall we passed into the Rotunda, roofed by a dome, and directly under it stood the gorgeous marble sepulchre like a miniature chapel, which

was said to be that wherein once lay the body of Christ.

The air was thick with the smoke of incense, silver censers were swung to and fro incessantly by stout priests, whose long bushy hair streamed behind them as they moved. At all points of the Rotunda these priests swung their censers, from which rose thick pearly smoke, and everywhere lamps of all kinds burned sweet olive oil.

From every quarter came the chant of anthems, the sound of instrumental and vocal melody, the sound of organ and choir, rising harmoniously above the whispering discord of eager pilgrims. What with the music of anthem vibrating through the Rotunda and halls, pealing through every aisle and nave, and filling the entire church, and the countless lamps reflecting their many-coloured lights upon the burnished metals which depended from every projection, and the sombre forms flitting by, vanishing, and emerging from behind the fires, and the bright silver censers swung to and fro with clouds of incense, and the ragged pilgrims moving around kissing every stone, bowing towards every point, one could hardly imagine oneself in such close proximity to the tomb of Christ.

My cicerone asked if we should proceed. The question recalled me to myself, and with other bending pilgrims, though scoffing at what I deemed a mimicry, I entered a chapel a few feet square, before the Holy Tomb. This is the Chapel of the

Angel, because it is said the angel of the Lord sat on the stone which he had moved from the tomb. Precious lamps depended in profusion from the ceiling, tawdry richness lined the walls, plates of gold and silver traced over with Christ crowned in thorns, Christ crucified, and other scenes, were set against the walls before a small altar, and the smoke of incense and burning spices filled the chapel. A piece of the stone which covered the tomb was shown to me.

Waiting until the pilgrims preceding me had backed out of the chapel and had finished their kissing, I bent my back and almost crawled in on all fours, and at last I stood upright before the tomb! Though I confess to being sceptical about almost everything which was told to me concerning the Holy Sepulchre, and the things which are within the church, I felt thrilled when I found myself standing over what is credited to have been the tomb of the Saviour.

I could not imitate the fervour of the fanatical pilgrims in their passionate embraces of the cold marble slab which covers the tomb, but I went so far as to yield to the desire to lay my hand upon it. A Greek priest, who was the guardian of the tomb, stood at my side while I made my notes. Pilgrims came one after another in endless succession, mostly Russians. It was curious to see their conduct: some spread themselves over the slab, and kissed it everywhere with the unctuous and expressive satisfaction of lovers' kisses—kissed the cold stone while groaning

their content, kissed edges and surface of it, some as if they would devour it. But such is fanaticism! It is not likely that I shall forget that gorgeous chapel, its many burning lamps, the marble tomb, the bending pilgrims, the priestly guardian ever praying, the incense curling in wreaths around each picture.

Lest I should offend the worthy priest I also backed out of the chapel with my face towards the tomb.

Once out of it, we mingled among the pilgrims and started for a tour through the extensive building. The bare enumeration of what was seen by us must suffice.

We were shown—

"The identical crown of thorns with which Jesus was crowned."

"A piece of the column to which Christ was bound to be scourged by Pilate."

"A piece of the true cross whereon Christ was crucified."

"A low dark chamber wherein Christ was imprisoned previous to crucifixion."

"A stone with two holes in it called the stocks of Christ."

"A short marble column which marks the centre of the earth."

"A piece of a stone whereon Christ sat while the Jews crowned Him, and blindfolded Him, and slapped Him on the face, saying, 'Prophecy who it is that smote thee.'"

"The identical hole in the rock wherein the cross was planted for the crucifixion upon Calvary."

"The rent in the rock caused by the earthquake which occurred when Christ died."

"The place where Adam's skull was found, and, finally, the tomb of Melchizedek, King of Salem."

"Several spots whereon the Virgin Mary sat or stood during the trial and crucifixion of Christ."

But these are not all; the Angel of God comes down every Easter Eve, and lights up every lamp and candle within the chapel of the tomb!

When the traveller has viewed all these things and has heard the strange medley of nonsense poured into his ear by the conventional cicerone, my mind inclines to the thought that he will think himself not a whit wiser than he was before he entered the church. The church of the Holy Sepulchre contains as many spurious objects as Barnum's museum used to boast of. And, mind you, these things are to be seen in a church dedicated to the service of God, in hearing of chanted prayers and notes of praise; they are sanctioned by people consecrated to the service of God, dressed in the robes of ministration, whose lips are constantly framed to avow the Creed.

Fancy a crown of thorns preserved for over 1800 years! The fictions told every day within that church are too numerous to mention. It would be impossible to state which particular sect at Jerusalem is most guilty of deception. Sometimes I think it is the Greek Church, and again I feel inclined to award the palm to the Moslems, while the Latins must also have a share in the award.

The Mohammedans boast of their Mosque, because it undoubtedly stands on the site of the Temple of Solomon, but then the Christian church covers numberless holy things. The Mohammedans show the footprints and finger marks of Mohammed, their prophet, and of an angel, but the Greeks and Latins

have their Golgotha, and the fissure in the rock. The Moslems pride themselves upon the possession of the Holy of Holies, of the ancient Temple site and the hand marks made by the Angel Gabriel as he held the huge rock down to prevent it rising with Mohammed as he ascended to Heaven on Alborak; while the Greeks exult in having the tomb which held the body of Christ, the Latins in having the place where the exaltation of the cross took place, the Syrians in the possession of the tombs of Joseph and Nicodemus, while the Armenians are joyful over the angel's stone which they stole from the ante-chapel of the sacred tomb; and thus the tale goes on. But besides the possession of the whole of Moriah, the Moslems have the tomb of David upon Zion!

Could moderns but get at the ruins of the ancient city, all vexed questions concerning the topographical identification of sacred places would be laid at rest. Until these places are settled we are utterly in doubt what to believe.

Against the fanatical belief of the Christians at Jerusalem there is arrayed the judgment of the learned respecting the topography of Jerusalem. Let us briefly glance over the history of the Holy City.

In the days of David, Jerusalem was called Jebus. It was a small mountain fortress crowning the Hill of Zion.

When David challenged the people of Jebus, they said to him: "Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither," meaning

that the walls of Jebus were so strong that even the blind and lame of the city would suffice for their defence. So David turned to his army and, addressing them, said: "Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first, he shall be chief and captain." With the devotion of a hero Joab led the assault, smote the Jebusites first, was made chief and captain, and David afterwards lived in Zion and called it the city of David. From this date commences the history of Jerusalem as the civil capital, not only of Judah and Benjamin, but of all Israel.

After David's death and burial Solomon his son realised the designs of his father, and erected a temple upon Mount Moriah, a hill opposite Zion, between it and Olivet.

"The temple was beautiful for situation; the joy of the whole earth." Sheba's Queen came from beyond Ophir to see it, she had heard so much of its grandeur. The area of the Temple is supposed to be 600 feet square. Any portion of the hill of Moriah agrees with the site, still it has not been proved, because the site is in the hands of exacting and jealous Moslems. But from the Biblical description of the Temple its beauty must have been matchless, as it rose crowning Moriah like a vast fortress, lording it above the valleys, lovingly sheltered and enfolded by the hills round about Jerusalem. Every stone was white, and glistening from the distance it must have appeared like a mighty avalanche resting upon a mountain.

Much of the roof was covered with gold; vines of

gold depended from the roof; gold covered the chapiters of the pillars. What a spectacle it must have been when the full radiance of a setting sun or its morning splendour fell upon the precious metal! As the foundations of the Temple rested upon a rock, and as the summit of the rock of Moriah was over 200 feet, almost perpendicular above the bed of the Kedron, and as Solomon built three tiers of walls from the Kedron up to the level of the summit, and as the splendid Temple rose 210 feet above Moriah, what an incomparable building it must have been! And each stone had been prepared for adjustment at the quarries with bevelled edges chiselled smooth for two inches along each border.

The richness of the interior, with cunning designs traced in the cedar, stone, marble, and in the precious metals, was admirable. The stone work was covered with ornamented cedar boards, the ceilings were also of cedar artistically decorated by the best Syrian artificers, and the floors were of carved fir. The sanctuaries, ceiling, wall and floor were covered with thick plates of gold; the cherubim—massive images of broad-winged angels—were of gold; the hinges of the doors and the nails, the bowls, basins, and ewers were of gold; but innumerable were the costly things within the Temple, either of pure gold, or lavishly adorned with gold. Besides these, the conveniences for such a noble building, the "Great Sea," the altar, the pipes, the aqueducts, the fountains, the deep wells and spacious cisterns, all for the priests and their offices,

what must they have not been—how intricate, how skilfully designed with regard to sanitary laws! A hundred and twenty thousand head of cattle sacrificed at the inauguration of the Temple for the service of God! What was the sum expended on this gorgeous structure? Whence was the money derived? In Kitto's Pictorial Bible, David's treasures which he had gathered are computed at a vast sum. They have been variously estimated from $100,000,000 to $5,000,000,000. Conjecture cannot aid moderns here.

The subsequent history of the Temple is the history of the city of Jerusalem. The Temple of Solomon into which the glory of the Lord had descended, wherein the sacrifices at the inauguration were kindled by fire from Heaven, existed in all its glory for the period of 423 years, when it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. One hundred and eleven years afterwards the second Temple was commenced and was dedicated nineteen years later. But this building was peculiarly unfortunate, and suffered much from the repeated wars in which the Jews were plunged while fighting for independence. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Herod the child-murderer, the third Temple was commenced.

Within eighteen months the priests and the Levites had reconstructed the Temple itself, and eight years later the colonnades and adjoining buildings, the cloisters, the bridges, the spacious courts were finished; but as there were continual improvements and embellishments prosecuted, the Jews could say

with truth that the Temple of Herod took forty-six years to rebuild. When our Lord commenced His ministry the Temple was complete in every detail.

Many times was His voice heard within it while praying, blessing, or persuading. The knowledge of its fate drew tears from Him.

At the time of the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, the city was about five English miles in circumference; its walls included the promontory of Ophel, entire Zion, Acra, Bezetha and Moriah. The Jews had gathered from all parts to celebrate the Passover, and there were within the city or encamped close to the walls over 2,500,000 pilgrims during the siege, of whom it is stated that 1,100,000 perished by pestilence, famine or the sword, 40,000 were permitted to go free, and 97,000 were made prisoners and sold into slavery. Excepting the towers of Hippicus, Pasphimus, and Marianne, and a portion of the western wall, the fortifications were levelled, and if we may believe Josephus, "none would have imagined the site of the city had ever been inhabited."

The following is a recapitulation of the sieges and wars Jerusalem has undergone, of which history makes mention:—

1. Jebus, sacked by the tribe of Judah under Joshua.—Judges i. 8.

2. Jebus, assaulted and taken by storm by David and Joab.—2 Samuel v. 8–10.

3. Jerusalem entered by Shishak, King of Egypt,

and plundered in Rehoboam's reign.—2 Chron. xii. 9–11.

4. Jerusalem plundered by Arabians and Philistines in the reign of Jehoram.—2 Chron. xxi.

5. Jerusalem plundered by King of Israel in the time of Amaziah.—2 Chron. xxv. 21–24.

6. Jerusalem plundered by King of Babylon in the reign of Jehoiakim.—2 Chron. xxvi.

7. Jerusalem plundered by Nebuchadnezzar in the reign of Zedekiah.—Jer. xxxvii. The walls were demolished and Jerusalem was desolated.

8. Jerusalem taken by Ptolemy, 320 B.C.

9. Jerusalem entered by Ptolemy Philopator, 289 B.C.

10. Jerusalem taken by Antiochus the Great, 203 B.C.

11. Jerusalem retaken by Scopus the Alexandrian General, 99 B.C.

12. Jerusalem re-occupied by Antiochus the Great, 198 B.C.

13. Jerusalem plundered by Heliodorus and Maccabeus.

14. Jerusalem plundered and desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes, 169 B.C.

15. Jerusalem taken by Pompey, 63 B.C.

16. Jerusalem plundered by Crassus, 54 B.C.

17. Jerusalem occupied by the Parthians, 40 B.C.

18. Jerusalem stormed and captured by Herod the child-murderer, 37 B.C.

19. Jerusalem plundered and utterly desolated by Titus, 70 A.D.

20. Jerusalem taken by the Persian Chosroes II., 614 A.D.

21. Jerusalem re-taken by the Roman Heraclius, 628 A.D.

22. Jerusalem surrendered to the Caliph Omar, 637 A.D.

23. Jerusalem stormed and captured by Godfrey of Bouillon, 1099 A.D.

24. Jerusalem re-captured by Saladin, 1187 A.D.

25. Jerusalem taken by the Ottoman monarch Selim I., 1517 A.D.

26. Jerusalem surrendered to Mehemet Ali of Egypt, 1832 A.D.

27. Jerusalem restored to Turkey, 1840 A.D.

What a concourse of terrible associations, of insatiable cruelty, murder, revenge, lust and all manner of abominable acts do not these repeated sieges suggest! Lo! every stone is a witness of something or other great in history, every corner of Jerusalem is replete with transcendent memories, and every hill which flings its shadow towards Jerusalem recalls unutterable things! Contemplate what you will; look from any point of the horizon, and before you stands a monument of God's wrath. Zion is a ploughed field; the actual site of the Temple that was forty-six years in building is a matter of controversy; the city whose towers were numberless, whose bulwarks were a wonder to the nations by which the Almighty swore, lies buried under mountains of *débris*, of garbage, of crushed mortar, and carved stone!

CHAPTER X.

Jealousies Excited by the Explorations below Jerusalem—The Discoveries Underground—Ophel—A remarkable Underground Passage—The Shaft near the Golden Gate—The Foundations of the Temple of Solomon—Beautiful Corner-Stones—The Tyropean Valley—Going Down to Explore—The Great Sea—Summary.

HÔTEL MEDITERRANÉE, JERUSALEM, *Jan. 19th*, 1870.

"THE right understanding of the Bible, the correct location of every place mentioned therein, a collection of antiquities, maps, drawings, and photographs, and a new Geography of Palestine, ancient and modern," were promised to us as the results of the Exploration Fund. The following account of what has hitherto been done by the engineers conducting the exploration will be of interest.

When Captain Warren and his assistants came to Jerusalem queer reports were circulated about them. Among the ignorant Mohammedans it was the belief that they were come to search for hidden treasure. The Jews, the Latins, Greeks, Armenians, and the other countless sects resident in Jerusalem entertained the most curious ideas concerning them.

But whatever their real purposes might be, each sect seemed bent upon frustrating them, lest something that they themselves overlooked would be taken away. Stupid fanatical sheikhs were always found ready to interfere against what they called the sacrilege; Jews and their Rabbis were ever on the

alert, and held jealous council with each other, and through their representations they kindled the avarice of the Pasha at Jerusalem.

The Latins and Greeks were only too disposed to baulk all attempts at exploration. To remove the many difficulties which were created for them, high influences had to be brought into play, and since the objects of the Society were laudable, no faith insulted, no pre-empted right infringed, the Sultan conceded power to dig, excavate, demolish, plough, turn over, examine and explore upon any portion of Palestine territory provided the Society obtained permission from the tenant or proprietor of the soil. The authorities at Constantinople, of Syria and Jerusalem, were persuaded to look kindly upon the projects, and promises of protection and assistance were obtained.

The excavations about the Holy City have been progressing at intervals for over two and a half years. It was only at certain seasons that they could be prosecuted. But what has been discovered is so far important that we begin to understand Old Jerusalem intelligibly. We find that the modern city is completely honeycombed beneath with arches, with great aqueducts crossing and intersecting each other, with extensive cisterns, all apparently parts of a system well ordered and beautifully designed for the purposes of a large city. Beneath those ill-paved streets of the Jerusalem of to-day, 40, 50, and 100 feet below, lies ancient Jerusalem, "the city of the Great King."

Under the ugly modern houses lies the chaste architecture of the ancient Jews and Syrian workmen. Ninety feet deep of *débris* covers the Tyropean Valley, which in Solomon's days was spanned by that noble bridge which astonished the Queen of Sheba.

After penetrating through 120 feet of all manner of earthy refuse, they have laid bare, to the delight of Bible scholars, the foundation of Solomon's Temple. By a shaft driven down full 100 feet deep outside the Haram area, and a gallery which runs northward, they discovered the Street of David, and Old Jerusalem developed itself with a different aspect and contour to that presented by the new.

We know now, to a certainty, how deep the ancient city lies buried under the rack and ruin of twenty-seven sieges, and *débris* of centuries. Year by year the refuse had been gathering over its grave, valleys had been filled up, and hills had been levelled.

And, indeed, this was principally the reason why modern sites disagreed with Biblical descriptions, and Josephus was deemed unreliable.

It would be tedious were I to describe in detail the discoveries which have been made by Captain Warren and his officers. The chorography of Jerusalem must be written anew. For instance, here is an error in Dean Stanley's "Sinai and Palestine."

He says, "All accounts combine in asserting that the water of the two pools of Siloam, as well as that

of the many fountains of the Mosque of Omar, proceeds from a spring or reservoir of water beneath the Temple vaults."

It was the prevailing conjecture of all writers upon Palestine. Milton kept himself within bounds when he called Siloam the

> "Brook that flowed
> Hard by the oracle of God."

This brook is found to take its rise from the Virgin's fount, several scores of feet southward of the Temple area. To get at this fount Captain Warren crawled along 1750 feet of a rocky passage through which, in many places, a man could scarcely wriggle. Passages in Barclay's book, "City of the Great King," must also be corrected, where he endeavours to describe the rocky, worn channel leading from Siloam towards the Temple. Warren has found the rock-hewn shaft which communicated with the Virgin's fount and supplied the inhabitants of Ophel with living water.

Ophel, which was the poor quarter of Jerusalem, and situated directly south of Solomon's Temple, has been clearly defined. Warren had a trench dug which exposed the natural escarps of the rock, extensive portions of walls 15 feet thick running in direct line with the eastern wall of the Temple. At a depth of 60 feet this immense Ophel wall was 15 feet thick. In some places there were found portions of two walls built closely together and parallel with each other, the stones of which were

cleanly and squarely dressed, without bevel. A road of concrete, 12 feet wide, was traced running parallel with Ophel towards the angle of Ophel which would be about Siloam. Running southward from the Haram area (Temple area), bounding the valley of Jehoshaphat on the west, and banking the west side of the Kedron, Ophel is defined as extending towards the spring of Enrogel, but whether its walls encircled the pool of Siloam or not is not quite determined. From the pools, Ophel runs north-west along the Tyropean Valley, towards the south-western extremity of the Haram area, so that in few words it may be described as a low prolongation of Moriah to the south.

Although the surface of Ophel is at the present day covered with vegetable gardens and olive-trees, and gives no indication superficially of ever having formed a part of Jerusalem, Captain Warren has made several discoveries on it. Coins, stone weights with geometric inscriptions on them, interesting pieces of pottery, and lamps of very ancient date, have also been furnished by the excavations.

One very interesting discovery has been but lately made, close by the spring of Enrogel or "Joab's Well." An Arab tradition stated that in the bed of the Kedron, but a few feet of Enrogel, there was a treasure buried, and an old man of Siloah even went so far as to enter into some details, saying that if any one dug down to a place which he would point out, a stone slab would be found, and underneath it a pot of gold. Warren ordered his sergeants to com-

mence an excavation at the designated place. After penetrating a few feet below the surface a slab was discovered, sure enough. With expectation raised to the highest pitch, the slab was lifted, and below it was an earthern pot, but within the pot there was no gold, and only a little earth. The pot rested on another slab of stone, and when this was heaved up the dark entrance to a long, narrow, rocky passage was seen which led in a slanting direction towards the base of the mountain rising on the right bank of the Kedron. The passage easily admitted the erect body of a man within, but it was filled, a few feet from the mouth, with a muddy deposit. Workmen were immediately set to work to clear it, and the discovery of fifty steps cut in the solid rock proved that this was a means of communication with some place below. To cut the story short, this "some place" was proved to be a lengthy passage chiselled out of the rock, and running parallel with the Kedron, about 40 feet below its bed, for a course of nearly 4000 feet.

It is not yet completely opened ; but what can this rocky tunnel, 4000 feet of which has already been opened, with space enough for two men to walk abreast uprightly, have been intended for? An additional mystery to it is the fact that at every two hundred feet there shoots a branch channel slantingly upward to the daylight. There is no connection between the tunnel and Enrogel Spring, though it runs by it at the distance of only 20 feet. It is rather premature to start a theory respecting the uses

of such a channel. Close to the Kedron, and winding below the surface of the earth in endless crooks, it leads past Enrogel Spring, up towards the Tyropean Valley.

Another clue to the ancient contour of the ground in the early days of Jerusalem has been found opposite and near the Golden Gate. But first there must be a clear description of the Haram area.

Omar, the Caliph of the Saracens, when he captured the city, demanded to know where the Temple of the Jews had stood. The Greek patriarch pointed to the level summit of the hill Moriah, and Omar enclosed the whole area with a high and strong wall. In the centre of it was a natural rock rising several feet above the contiguous ground, and over this rock Omar erected his superb dome, since called the Mosque of Omar. The Haram measures on its east side 1391 feet. 373 feet from the north-east angle of the Haram area is seen what goes under the name of the Golden Gate. It is a double portal with arches profusely ornamented in a style which is neither Greek, Egyptian, nor Saracenic, but is striking and excellent. From the exterior the portal seems to have been built upon a comparatively modern wall. Tradition says that at this place Mohammed is to judge all men at the last day. But it is not with senseless traditions nor with the architecture of the Golden Gate that I have to do with now; it is with Captain Warren's discoveries in front of the Golden Gate. In front of the Golden Gate, and along the walls on either side, lay hundreds of Mohammedan

graves, but its charming name and its peculiar appearance demanded that the vicinity should be explored. But how? was the question.

Could the wall along its length be bared to its foundations, some light respecting the identification of the Haram area with the Temple site might be had. But the Mohammedan graves thickly strewn in the vicinity, containing the bodies of pious Moslems awaiting the trump of the Archangel and the second advent of Mohammed, could not be disturbed, else a savage howl against Frankish desecration would be raised. Tombs are not generally so sacred in Palestine that they may not sometimes be used for stables and as dwelling-places for living men, but the privilege is not for Franks. So Warren, highly interested in his work, and determining to find out what was beneath the Golden Gate, sunk a shaft at a distance of 143 feet in front of the southern angle of the gate, and in a line perpendicular to it, to a depth of 81 feet. The Moslems could not conjecture what such a shaft meant; when they looked down into it, they but saw the flaring of a candle and a man at the bottom of the pit.

From the bottom of the pit, however, there ran a gallery west towards the Golden Gate, which crawled over successive scarps of virgin rock 3 and 4 feet high, and rose to the wall of the Golden Gate. At 18½ feet from the bottom of the pit a tank or a well cut tomb was discovered; the gallery, however, passed over this until at 27 feet there was another

cut scarp 3 feet 9 inches high on the south side, running in a north-westerly direction, the natural surface of it inclining to the north.

The gallery followed the scarp for over 10 feet, when it turned northward, then it crossed the scarp, and on its top was found a piece of royal masonry wall. At 47 feet, the gallery gradually rising with the incline of the native rock, the excavators came across what they call shingle or stone *débris* from ancient walls; 53 feet further another rough masonry wall was discovered. This being broken through, the gallery was continued, and at 68 feet a portion of a column 3 feet in diameter was found standing 3 feet above the rock. At the base of the column were found masons' marks, casts of which were taken.

Hence the gallery was driven by the bold engineer through disjointed masses of old walls, which had been probably overthrown by the tremendous blows of a battering-ram. These wall masses alternated with layers of dry shingle or stone *débris*, which on being touched, as all miners will testify, run like water. Precautionary measures were taken against the caving in of this shingle, which would have swallowed them up. And the gallery was continued until, at the distance of 97 feet from the pit, or 46 from the Golden Gate, a massive masonry wall was reached running north and south. After futile attempts to break through this wall and penetrating it about 5 feet, the gallery was run south so as to bare the wall, but no break being perceived in it, it was

tamped up. Then from a point east of the column a branch gallery was driven 14 feet, when they again turned west, that is, toward the wall of the Golden Gate. 34 feet from the turn the massive wall was again met with running north-westerly; the gallery was driven along it for 55 feet, but the shingle or loose stone *débris* came in with a rush, and the attempt was reluctantly abandoned.

These interesting excavations have discovered three things:—

1st. That at the Golden Gate the Haram wall extends below the present surface outside towards the west bank of the Kedron to a depth of from 30 to 40 feet.

2nd. That the rock has a northerly inclination near the Golden Gate.

3rd. That the original walls were built upon the slopes of Moriah, and followed the rock, and not as the Haram wall would suggest, in a lengthy straight line.

Very important suggestions are presented to us here.

May not this massive wall running north-westerly be the north-western wall of the Temple? What mean these successive scarps cut out of the solid rock upon the western slope of Moriah, and these frequent windings of the "massive wall"? "Walk about Zion, go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks," sings the Psalmist. Thus, under the groups of Moslem graves full 50 feet, we find portions of those towers of Zion, and fragments

of her formidable bulwarks. Scripture and Josephus are being gradually understood. Jerusalem as it stood in the days of its glory is being bit by bit explained.

There are two more important discoveries made by Captain Warren, which I ought to mention. The first is that made at the south-east angle of the Haram area. The Haram wall runs in one straight line without a break 1018 feet from the Golden Gate. The slope of Moriah inclines rapidly to the ravine at the bottom, which in the Bible is called the Valley of Jehoshaphat; the bottom of this valley or ravine is the bed of the Kedron. The present Haram wall rises some 50 or 60 feet in different places above the surface of Moriah. Outside the wall the top of the Mount is composed of earthy refuse, with here and there a Moslem grave dotting its surface. At the south-east corner the Haram wall shoots in a straight line direct west along the divisional line between Ophel and Moriah. It is exactly at this south-east angle about 40 feet from the corner-stones of the Haram wall, where Warren made a most important discovery, and it is of what I saw at this place that I wish to speak.

Leaving the bright daylight, with our eyes taking their parting glance of the stupendous and lofty Haram wall, which rose just in front of us, Sergeant Birtles and myself descended the shaft at the south-east angle, that I might gain an idea of the ancient walls of Jerusalem. The shaft was like any other

shaft known to miners, square with stout planking, and a triangular gin with an iron wheel attached, with gearing for running up the excavated soil, stood over the mouth.

Our means of descent were by an unsteady rope ladder, which swayed to and fro with every muscular exertion we made. I had counted fifty rungs a foot apart, and yet, looking down, I could see the little speck of a candle-light far, very far below. After a descent of 85 feet from the surface of the earth my feet touched the bottom. Hitherto I had seen nothing interesting, there was but the swaying ladder, the clean planking, the bit of azure sky which smiled over Jerusalem, the tiny flame below. After taking a long breath of relief and rubbing my arm muscles, I heard a voice say, "This way, sir," and turning round saw the figure of the Sergeant wriggling itself through a dark gallery with a waxen taper in his hand to light the way. As we crept on all fours my skull took unhappy cognisance frequently of the ceiling above.

After travelling some 40 feet my companion silently squatted in front of a splendid wall, and held his taper light close against the stone for my inspection. The stones I saw were as smoothly polished and seemed as fresh as if but just extracted from the quarry. They were of a surprising vastness and solidity, with their faces smooth as a mirror; they were corner-stones 15, 20, and 22 feet in length, while one on the very lowest course, which rested on

the natural limestone rock, and whose place had been scooped out with admirable nicety, was 28 feet long. The second stone above it retreated 6 inches from the outer face of the lowest, and the third and fourth in like manner retreated 6 inches, which was for the purpose of gaining strength and stability. To us, nearly 90 feet below the surface, these courses appeared like the commencement of a pyramidal structure. There was neither bevel nor draught about these stones, their faces were all smooth and the joints fitted one to another with such exactness that it required a most minute inspection to detect them. On the lowest course of stones we saw some curious characters—Phœnician letters savants declare them to be—which were traced in red pigment!

The splendid stones we now examined with such interest were the foundation stones of the temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod. The Syrian artisans of Solomon had laid them down on their beds of rock, as they were brought from the quarry cut and ready for building, and those which were above had been laid in the same manner one upon the other, for no iron instrument could be used within the Sanctuary of the Lord. And the ancient Syrian masons, with that pride in art which induced Sostros of Cnidus to put his name instead of his master's upon the lighthouse of Pharos, may have possibly left the initials of their names with like intent.

The beauty of these corner-stones was a subject of illustration to one of the psalmists to our Lord and

His apostles. "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation," says Isaiah, with lyric spirit. "That our daughters may be as corner-stones, cut after the similitude of a palace," said one of the psalmists. At what a dizzy depth they must have appeared when the outer walls of the Temple rose above the rock of Moriah 130 feet, and the clean rock sloped steeply down 200 feet into the bed of the Kedron!

Josephus says, "If from its roof one attempted to look down into the gulf below, his eyes became dark and dizzy before they could penetrate to the immense depth." To gaze down a depth of 330 feet was enough to make a man giddy.

To batter such a place from such a point, no wonder Titus deemed it impossible, and like a good general commenced operations from Scopus; and while kneeling down before these mysterious characters, I wondered how many hands it took to heap that *débris* 90 feet thick that was above me, and what a strange history every handful of this dirt had, sweepings of dust from the Temple floors, sediments of the water used at the sacrifices, ashes from the wood burnt upon the altar, and then a crashing column from a porch of Solomon, a heavy architrave, an elegant corbel, the beautiful coping, and then stone after stone, *débris* of the ruin mixed with the dead bodies of the valiant defenders, blood and gore of soldiers, then a general clearing out of the ruins for

the rebuilding of the Temple, and the same story again thrice told.

When once again in the dazzling light of a hot day, we had returned from the Jerusalem of thirty centuries ago to the modern Jerusalem which lies as buried in the darkness of bigotry as the foundations of old are by the *débris*.

Sergeant Birtles said to me: "There is another most important discovery, sir, at the south-west angle, which I am sure you will say is equal to this we have just seen."

Some other words which the Sergeant made use of so excited my curiosity that, though my arms ached with climbing rope ladders 90 feet long and my back was sore with crawling through low galleries, I determined to accompany him.

Our road lay along the southern wall of the Haram, which is now grey with age, and one of the most remarkable sights at Jerusalem, for in it is perceived several courses of the Herodian temple stones. Mosque El Aksa, or Omar, with its prodigious height of dead wall and immense stones, was passed; then finding the road blocked by a ruinous medley of tower and church wall, notable for its incongruity of architecture, we descended a few feet down the slope of Ophel, every atom of which seemed precious, then turned west, again passing tower after tower, and treading upon who knows what until we crossed the Tyropean Valley, and ascending a smart steep of Zion, we came before the Dung Gate—not the Dung

Gate of Old Jerusalem, for that was away further south. On passing through the Dung Gate, which was guarded by half-a-dozen slovens in Turkish uniform, we found ourselves within the walls, in a deserted portion of Jerusalem, where instead of houses or gardens I saw groves of ancient cacti growing amid little hills of garbage. These abominable mounds consist of everything offensive, and appear filthy enough to sicken a world. The Dung Gate was therefore fitly named.

About a hundred feet due east from it within the city is the Tyropean Valley, which runs from the vicinity of the pools of Siloam, along the western line of Ophel, and past the south-west angle of the Haram area northward, until it is lost sight of amid the thick mass of houses. The Tyropean Valley, it must be recollected, divided Zion from Moriah, and in fact it divided Jerusalem into two—one part on the side of Zion and the other on the Moriah side of the city. In those old days it differed very much from its present appearance.

While standing under the spring of Robinson's arch, and with a clue given to me by Mr. Birtles, who has been scores of feet below the ground where I stand, my imagination hastened to picture the valley of the Tyropean as it was then. The Hill of Zion, crowned with palaces and frowning towers, among which is conspicuous the tower and palace of David, spreads before me along an arc of a circle. Sumptuous buildings, resting on terraces faced with cut stone,

descend one after another, like the galleries of a theatre, to the rocky vale of the Tyropean, with gardens of fruit-trees, rare exotics, and spice shrubs interspersed between. Towers and gilded vanes appear at intervals above the roofs of mansions. Noble princes of Judah with their Bathshebas close beside them, promenade upon the housetops, taking evening views towards Bethlehem and Hebron to the south. Eastward is the Mount of Olives and its terraced gardens; strong Gibeah, the capital of Benjamin, with its tall towers and walls, lies to the north. The top of the bridge is on a level with the nave of the Stoa basilica of Herod, which extends along the crest of the southern wall of the Temple. At the further end of this noble cloister—that is, from the end overlooking the valley of Jehoshaphat—one might look along the length of the splendid nave flanked by two rows of lofty pillars on either side, away over the bridge to the broad street which leads to the summit of Zion. The bridge spans the Tyropean Valley by fifteen arches in three tiers. From the summit the depth must have appeared an abyss. The rocks on either slope descend in almost perpendicular sheets to a depth of 50 feet, converging at the bottom, so that the Tyropean resembles a deep fosse, where always more or less there runs a stream.

On my left hand as I look down the Tyropean Valley, rises the Temple from its solid foundation, a matchless structure, unequalled for its perfection of detail, for its lengthy colonnades of white stone

columns, for its receding courses of massive stones, for its terraces and cloisters, for its central sanctuary and its gigantic gateways. On my right is Zion, the palaces and fine mansions of the nobles, and the terraced gardens, a magnificent and dazzling spectacle. "God was well known in her palaces." Before me is the deep winding valley of the Tyropean, and behind me the deep dark Tyropean continues serving the purpose of a central conduit or main drain to the city. At several places it is crossed by little stone bridges, which connect lower Acra with Bezetha and Antonia, and spanned by greater ones joining Antonia to Acra.

Such a sight! Well might the disciples point the attention of Christ to the huge stones of which the glorious Temple was compacted; well might Titus pause to parley with the obdurate Jews before issuing his final orders for the destruction of Jerusalem. He gave the word, and the elegant balustrade toppled, fell over into the abyss, down into the deep gorge, with what a woeful resonance upon the ears of the besieged. The flagged and mosaiced road was torn up, and stone by stone hurled over; then the mighty voussoirs and the solid piers, and the Tyropean began to fill up. The ruins of houses on the slopes tumbled into it, and the *débris*, a city's refuse, was heaped in; then the ground, being deserted, was covered with soil, sown over, and lo! the fosse became a garden, somewhat like what it is to-day.

Dr. Robinson, an American, while exploring around

the Temple area eighteen centuries after the sad event took place, discovered by accident the spring of the first arch of the Great Bridge. This was all that was above ground, for the base of it was fully 180 feet below! Warren sunk a shaft 50 feet west and directly opposite the spring of the arch. He penetrated through several feet of most precious *débris*, and the picks of his workmen struck at last the first massive pier of the bridge. The ruins of the great voussoirs were next found, and after running galleries along the Tyropean, north and south, and directly east to the spring of the arch discovered by Robinson, the true story of the destruction of the Temple began to be revealed to the explorers.

I have heard the most prosaic men moralising over the ghastly relics discovered at Pompeii and Herculaneum, and have seen them fall into a train of sad thought as they looked at a vase or a piece of money which might have been dropped in that great moment of terror, when the melted lava ran like water through the streets of the city, and the sun could not be seen because of the sulphurous smoke and rain of fire; but try and conceive what thoughts possess one at sight of these interesting relics of the Temple bridge, and the discovery of a pavement which must have run along the second tier of arches. "The paving-stones are of hard mezzeh stone, and their surface is polished," writes Captain Warren. Ah! could these stones but speak! Six of these paving-stones weighed two and a half tons!

I felt when going down this shaft as if I were going to converse with Bible personages, much I daresay as Saul felt when about to question resurrected Samuel.

I gave no heed to the number of rungs I stepped on; the difficulty of descent was forgotten in the great interest of the visit. The pier is 12 feet 2 inches thick; the interesting fragment of the pavement, *in situ*, was like a narrow piece of a modern street, except the stones were much larger. The voussoirs of the arch stones were here before me like a great pyramid dismantled. My guide, the sergeant, plunged into a dark hole among these great stones. I plunged heedlessly after him, and for five minutes we were wriggling through without regard to the points of the compass; we then descended 20 feet lower down, and came to an arched passage. The roof was of arched stones, the sides were the solid rock, the passage was probably 8 feet high and was 4 feet in width. We marched up this passage north, until it broadened, then stopped where fallen *débris* and refuse of all kinds prevented further progress. Above was a round hole which revealed its purport. The expansion was a cistern. The carefully-constructed passage was a conduit for pure water.

Remembering that I was 60 feet below the surface of the garden of prickly pears, I perceived the antiquity of it, otherwise the passage might have been of any age, from three thousand years to three hundred. But 60 feet of such *débris*, consisting of

immense arch stones, mosaic pavement, carved balustrades covered over by a garden, suggests a very high antiquity.

Retracing our steps we came to a place where the corner of two voussoirs had penetrated the arched roof. This sight declares the force with which they fell, and proves another thing: that on the day of their fall there was no garden, no soil above the roof of the conduit, but that the roof of the conduit must have been used as a street running under one of the arches of the bridge, directly over and against the deepest part of the Tyropean Valley.

Mejr-ed-Din in the sixteenth century called this paved passage the Street of David, and describes it as leading from the gate of the Mosque-el-Aksa to the city gate once called the Mihrab, now of Hebron. It was so called from a subterranean gallery which David caused to be made from the Gate of the Chain to the citadel, called the Mihrab of David.

We then took an easterly course and came plump against the south-west angle of the Temple rising in courses upon courses of splendid stones, as clean cut, as trim and fresh in all their stately length and thickness, as when first laid down by the skilled workmen of Hiram. We had crossed the Tyropean; we now recrossed it, to wander about the mazy passages Warren and his assistants have made in underground Jerusalem. Tanks, cisterns, aqueducts, pavements, and lengths of solid wall similar to that at the Jews' wailing-place, were shown to me, but it

would be very tedious, and I have no space, to describe everything I saw. So let me generalise before I close and sum up these explorations.

It would be sheer folly to expect that Captain Warren with all his explorations should ever stumble upon any fine marble statues, golden candlesticks, and Gospel manuscripts, and certainly not upon the true cross of Christ, for that has been monopolised long ago by devout Christians; but the great object is probably getting within view.

The two principal points of interest were the sites of the Temple and the Holy Sepulchre. Through much excavating and comparing history with discoveries, certainty has been arrived at respecting the site of Solomon's Temple.

The hundred thousand conjectures concerning it are for ever laid at rest. Zion never more will be taken for Moriah; the fortress of Antonia will never more be thought to be the remains of the Temple, for the walls of the Temple upon Moriah have been laid bare even to the foundations. The virgin rock rising upward in a series of scarps from Kedron's bed to the summit of Moriah has been discovered; the Tyropean through all its immense depth has been sounded; nay, the Great Sea of Solomon's Temple has been found, and here are Warren's memoranda concerning it:—

"Tank No. 11, explored by me Nov. 11, 1867, is situate on east of Mosque-el-Aksa; bottom 61 feet 6 inches below the surface of the ground, which is

2416 feet above Mediterranean Sea level, consists of three tanks running east and west, and connected by a passage 14 feet wide, running north and south 100 feet by 60,—contains an area of 80 feet by 55 feet (4400 feet square) and is capable of holding 700,000 gallons of water, while the 'Great Sea' may contain 1,000,000."

The bridges which connected Moriah with Zion have been found, or rather the remains of them; the mode by which the Jews were supplied with water during the long siege is explained by their wonderful system of cisterns, aqueducts, and conduits; and the outlines of the ancient city have been traced, the most part with wonderful accuracy; and an interesting insight of some of the manners and customs of the ancient Jews may be obtained after an inspection of the little museum of curiosities collected by Captain Warren.

The time employed upon these discoveries, I think, has been very well spent, and the money expended is repaid to Bible readers by the unexpected successes of the explorers. But there are points about Jerusalem not yet satisfactorily investigated, and these cannot be proven unless the Society is supported with contributions. Instances: the tomb of David, of Solomon; the tombs of Judah's kings are supposed to be in the face of the hill rising east of the Kedron; the courses of the first, second, and third walls north of Antonia and Acra. On these depend the discovery of Calvary, and the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea,

wherein was laid the body of Jesus Christ; the famous towers of Herod; the substructures of the "Corraculum" venerated by Mohammedan tradition for being the burial-place of David; and there are minor things requiring solution, viz.:—"What does that underground rock-hewn tunnel under the Kedron bed mean? Where does it start from? How far does the covered aqueduct in the Tyropean extend? Is it connected in any way with Hezekiah's pools?"

A stream of running water north of Wilson's arch has been found, but not traced. Then there is the passage under the cave of "Mohammed" within the Temple area, and the exact line of wall along the brow of the valley of Himmon, and there is much ground within the Haram area not yet explored. The one great difficulty to the proper investigation of these is the want of funds.

Though nowhere is the Bible more read than in America, yet England has subscribed as many pounds sterling as the former has cents. This is probably because Americans were not generally aware of what was going on; but now that the *New York Herald* has been at the expense of sending a Special to report upon the works of the Palestine Exploration, it is to be hoped that contributions will be sent to the Society's office at 9 Pall Mall East, London, and for their reward, besides having the topography of Jerusalem accurately known, let them remember the words of the Psalmist, "They shall prosper that love thee, O Jerusalem!"

The explorations of Captain Warren have not been exclusively confined to David's city. During the hot summer months when a European would be prostrated with the heat which concentrates in that hill basin in which Jerusalem stands, Captain Warren has diligently employed himself in verifying Bible sites in other parts of Palestine. Dr. Eli Smith, an American and a profound Arabic scholar, was the first I am told who started this work. While missionary at Beyrout, he drew up a list of every town and village throughout Palestine as known to the present inhabitants, and he then laboriously instituted comparisons between those names and those found in Scripture. This was of course hypothetical, but many of these hypotheses were confirmed by a subsequent inspection of these districts by himself and Dr. Robinson, the well-known Palestine traveller. What Drs. Smith and Robinson had left undone devolved upon Captains Warren and Wilson.

With a map of Palestine as now drawn up by Captain Wilson, the student may study scriptural topography intelligently, and the traveller may satisfy himself at his leisure of the correctness of the work done.

NOTE.—Twenty-three years after the above letter was written, the following extract was published in the *Times*:—

"A recent consular report by Mr. Selah Merrill, United States Consul at Jerusalem, gives the following particulars regarding the Jaffa and Jerusalem Railway, the first built in Palestine or Syria, and already described in our columns:—The road is 53·6 miles long, with 30 miles located on the plains and the remainder over mountainous country. There are no

tunnels, long detours being preferred; but there are four fine iron bridges and at least five deep cuttings. The steepest grade is 2 per cent., or about 104 feet to the mile. The gauge is 1 metre, or 3·28 feet, and the wooden ties used came from France, and cost at Jaffa 80 cents each. There are five stations on the line between Jaffa and Jerusalem, and the 8½ acres of land at the terminal, about one mile outside the latter city, cost 25,000 dollars, whereas thirty years ago the same land was sold for one dollar per acre. This station is 2476 feet above the level of the Jaffa Station. The entire road cost about 2,000,000 dollars, and was built by a French company organised in 1889. The engineer in charge of surveys and construction was Mr. Gerald Eberhard, a Swiss, who was engaged on the Panama Railway for about eight years. The running time between Jaffa and Jerusalem is 1¾ hours down grade, and 3½ hours coming up, and the fare is 2.50 dollars first, and a dollar second class."

CHAPTER XI.

Constantinople to Sinope—Samsûn—Kerasunde—Trebizond, its History and Trade—Gifford Palgrave—The Necessity of studying Geography—Batûm—What an Error in Spelling cost the Russians—Poti—The River of the Ancient Argonauts—A Seed-bed of Ague—Fifty Nationalities—The Castrati of the Caucasus—The Fate of a Spy—Mark Tapley's Eden—Kutais and its Governor—Easter Day and its Festivities—Soldiers as Navvies—Arrival at Tiflis.

TIFLIS, GEORGIA, *May 3rd*, 1870.

MY last letter was written from Constantinople. From Constantinople to Tiflis is a long stretch of a journey. It includes voyaging by sea, by river,

riding on horseback, and a long drive over two hundred miles of country.

When I left the Turkish capital the good people of Pera were inquiring of one another what time good weather, bright sun and early summer were due on the Bosphorus ; for they were much in doubt whether the wet days of spring and the frost would ever cease. But the very next morning, when the steamer which bore me was out at sea, riding the Euxine, we greeted the early summer, and the surmises of the anxious residents must have been laid at rest. We were skirting the coast of Bithynia, and under the influence of the calm and genial day we much admired the view of green heights and the white cottages gleaming amid the deep verdure of orange and lemon trees, and the mild greenness of olive foliage, and the long stretch of winding, curving frontage of the mountainous coast which we saw from deck.

The coast towns of Northern Bithynia were not very celebrated in ancient history. Close to the boundary line between Paphlagonia and Bithynia lived the settlers from Arcadia. Not far from the modern Ereglé lived the Tyndaridæ.

A few hours after and we were gliding past the coast of Paphlagonia and came to Ineboli, where we landed a score of the natives, and were bothered for the time we stayed in port by the hopeless confusion of a score of barbarous voices. Ineboli is the ancient Ionopolis of the Ione. Leaving Ineboli, we con-

tinued eastward, the same range of lofty mountains continuing on our right, sometimes approaching close to the sea, and then receding a few miles inland.

Sinope is the next stopping place of the Russian Steam Navigation Company's steamers. It is built near the site of the ancient Sinope, which is celebrated in history as being the birthplace of the cynic philosopher, Diogenes. Modern Sinope has of late years been famous for being the scene of the sudden descent of the Russian fleet against the Turkish, which ended in the destruction of the Turkish ships and fort. It has a good harbour, but is open to improvement. It has quite recovered the blow Russia gave it, and it may be said to be prospering.

Thence to Samsûn is but a few hours' distance by steamer. The new town lies at the base and on the slopes of a hill, forming a wide arc; while Old Samsûn rests on a spur-like projection of the hill above it, and its turreted and towered wall gives it an appearance of respectable ancientness. The houses of the newer part stretch, suburban-like, on either flank far up the hill and along the beach. Some of them are very fine, and are surrounded by gardens and orchards. The great road to Diarbekir—brown and dusty—is visible as it climbs up the slope, and far over the jumble of hills beyond. To its right and left are lofty mountains. Through those to the right the Kayzil Irmak, or the ancient Halys, makes its way, pouring into the Black Sea, and muddying its waters for miles around its mouth. The Halys is

the scene of Crœsus' defeat, who misinterpreted the Oracle's words: "If Crœsus passes over the Halys, he shall destroy a great empire," which proved to be no other than his own. Only two small batteries of six guns each protect this important harbour, which is the *entrepôt* for the rich grain-fields of the interior of Asia Minor. Samsûn has no harbour, but there is an open baylet which is probably two miles from end to end. The ships and steamers ride abreast of the town. At present the bay is very insecure, for on the approach of a gale the steamers and ships slip their cables and proceed to sea, rather than risk the danger of being driven on shore. There is beautiful scenery in the vicinity, an abundance of woody recesses, glens, wildernesses of shrubs, and on the crests of the topmost mountains the trees stand out like the teeth of a fine comb.

The next port at which the passenger steamers stop is Kerasunde, the ancient Cerasus, from whence Lucullus imported his chariots to Rome. It lies on the slope of a solitary hill, which seems to have been shot forward apart from the wilderness of hills which surround it, by some internal agency. Its slopes become green long before the other hills in the neighbourhood have assumed their spring verdure, and on these, as at Samsûn, the wealthy citizens have hedged their houses round with opulent groves of the olive, lemon and orange. The town has been awakened into life by the frequent visits of the steamers plying along the coast, and straggles outside

its fortified wall along the gravel beach in many brown and white lines overlapping the hillsides. On its eastern and western flanks are deep frondiose gullies through which many streams issue to the sea. The beach exhibits a crowd of fishing sloops and a myriad of small boats. On a jutting knoll at the eastern end are interesting remains of some Genoese fortifications.

The next port is Trebizond, which on a clear day comes into view as soon as we pass Cape Voros. It is identified with the ancient Trapezus. Its harbour went under the name of Daphnus, and was formed by a projecting rock which had a large cave beneath. On the summit of the rock stood the Acropolis. The existing ruins of a castle are evidently Genoese. Trapezus was for some time the capital of the Eastern Empires. There remains enough of the Trebizond of those days to give the traveller an idea of what its strength was. It looks formidable even to-day, being strongly situated on a rocky platform of about a square half mile in extent, with deep ravines, artificially widened, separating it on the east and west sides from the hills around. Its northern side faces the sea, where it presents an upright frowning mass of rock topped by a castellated wall of great strength. On the south it must always have been weakest, where the only obstacles were the wall and the unevenness peculiar to rocky ground. The bridges spanning the ravines on its eastern and western flank are grey and hoary with age, and a

glimpse from the top of any one of them will gratify the traveller in search of the picturesque. He will be able to see traces of the castle described by Procopius as having been built by Justinian, whose ditches were hewn out of the solid rock. It was at Trebizond that Xenophon and his 10,000 reached the sea. The pass now frequented by the caravans to Erzeroum must have been the one used by the Greeks. Some fine old frescoes of the twelfth century, portraits of Byzantine princes, mosaics, and a monument to Solomon, King of Georgia, under a canopy of stone are shown in the old Byzantine churches. Santa Sophia, a church now used as a mosque, a mile west of the city, is a very fine relic of the early Christian architecture. Gifford Palgrave, the Arabian traveller, who is Consul here, acted as my guide through the place.

Trebizond is the principal Turkish port of the Black Sea, and might become a most important city, if the Turkish Government stirred themselves into competing with the Russians. The facilities which Trebizond offers for communication with the interior of the far East of Asia Minor, with such important towns as Tabriz, Teheran, Isfahan and Baghdad, are great. The harbour, now very insecure—so much so that during the stormy term vessels have to go to Platina, seven miles distant—might be rendered safe at small expense. The commerce with Persia at present is considerable. Camel caravans are constantly coming in with silk goods, wool, gold thread,

arms, and gold and silver filigree work from Persia. The total value of business done in the port represents about £1,400,000. Its population is about 50,000. Most of the countries of Europe have consuls here, but the United States are not represented. The half-dozen American travellers who have visited here within as many years have, however, been always hospitably received by the English Consul. But it seems that the growing trade and commerce of Trebizond has attracted the attention of office-seekers in America, for the Minister at Constantinople told me an amusing story of how but a short time ago a gentleman from America came to Constantinople with an appointment of consulship at Trebizond, expecting to be remunerated by fees. He was very much astonished when he was told that the city of Trebizond, though prosperous and likely in time to be great, was visited by American ships but once in twenty years, and that probably if he stayed there for ten years his fees in the whole course of that time would not amount to ten dollars. The new consul at Trebizond—appointed, I believe, by special favour—instantly said he would be ——— thrice over before he would go to Trebizond, and though he had been officially recognised, he immediately returned to America without seeing Trebizond, taking his *exequatur* with him as a souvenir of his short consulship. The moral for office-seekers is: "Study geography."

Batûm is the next port after Trebizond, and the uttermost destination of the steamers running from

Constantinople along the southern coast of the Black Sea. Passengers bound for the Caucasus change here for Poti, to which they are taken by light draught tugs. Batûm is the ancient Battrys Portus, and is by far the best port on the southern coast.

Unimportant as the harbour and town of Batûm appears to be now—the only vessels are half-a-dozen fishing-boats at anchor—it must sooner or later become the scene of strife between the Russians and the Turks for its possession. To know with what envious eyes the Russians look upon it, one need but ask the opinion of the first Russian captain he will see. It was only by a slight mistake in spelling that Prince Woronzoff, Governor of the Caucasus, some years ago, lost this coveted acquisition to Russia while negotiating respecting the boundary line between Caucasian Russia and Armenian Turkey.

There are two rivers close to Batûm, one to the east named Tchuruk, another to the west named Tcharoukh, pronounced Charuk. Between Churuk and Charuk there is not much difference in pronunciation, yet this difference had better have been noticed carefully when the treaty was made, for by this slight error the Russians lost the good port of Batûm, which was, in fact, the object of the negotiation, and an extent of country well worth a contest. Had the word on the treaty been worded Tcharoukh, Batûm had been won by Russia.

The reason that this port is so ardently desired by a Power which is already the greatest in territory in

the world, is that from Sevastopol to the uttermost boundary line of the Caucasus there is not a single good harbour available to large steamers. All the ports are either too shallow or too exposed to the Euxine gales. Those on the western shore of the Caucasus are particularly bad, and Poti is about the worst, and as a railway from Poti to the Caspian Sea will be completed a couple of years hence, a good port is very necessary to Russia. Batûm is but a small town of some three thousand inhabitants. Consuls from England, Russia, Austria and France are located there.

The immense range of the Caucasus is first seen from Batûm. In looking at the stupendous mountains, it is difficult to imagine that a road penetrated through the heart of them. Yet a road does exist between Batûm and Kars, but it is dangerous, being a mere mule path, running along deep precipices, and winding in the most crooked manner through numerous passes until it reaches the lofty tableland of Armenia. A good road would benefit Batûm and the interior, and the corn, barley, etc., of the peasants of the highlands might be exchanged for some implements of agriculture, and a thousand other things which they stand in much need of.

We shifted our berths from the comfortable Russian steamer into a tug, by which we were conveyed to Poti, distant twenty-five miles from Batûm. Poti has no harbour. The ships lie outside, three, four, and five miles from the mouth of the Rion, which

discharges its volume of muddy water a couple of miles below the straggling town. The Rion is about fifty yards wide, and flows between low swampy banks suggestive of fever and ague.

With all its drawbacks as a port, Poti is likely to become an important place. At present it has half-a-dozen brick buildings of large dimensions, a couple of pretty good hotels, and any number of wooden cabins, which are similar to the frame houses in the States. The traveller needs to be sharp at these hotels, and order his bills before retiring to bed if he intends to travel next morning, as the landlord of the Hotel Colchide has a faulty pen when making bills. I narrowly escaped being victimised out of a considerable sum.

Poti possesses a fort mounting a dozen guns, and has an old fortification now in ruins. The lighthouse stands on the Mingrelian side of the river Rion, and the railroad commences from near that point. The Mingrelian side of the Rion is far more interesting than the Gouriel side. For many reasons Mingrelia pleased me as it pleases all travellers. It is famous for the beauty of its women and the extraordinarily attractive features of the children of both sexes ; for its noble forests of ash, mulberry, and sycamore, and the number and variety of game.

The railway to Bakû progresses but slowly. The workmen regard their numerous fêtes and fasts with more than exemplary exactitude, which reduces over three hundred working days into two hundred days.

While I was in Mingrelia the native navvies were keeping up an eight days' fast with great zeal.

The Rion is the ancient Phasis up which the Argonauts ascended to obtain the golden fleece 3133 years ago! The Phasis runs through Colchis, now known by the names of Mingrelia, Imeritia and Gouriel. There was a lovely goddess in Colchis named Ea in the far-off Golden Age, and Phasis was in love with her. To rescue her from the pursuit of her lover, the gods turned her into an island. I believe you may see that island still at the mouth of the river, where Phasis has continued to love her and offer his offerings at her feet, which I take to be a remarkable instance of steadfast love.

In the early morning the steamer glided up the Phasis for Orperi, while a light mist or thin fog hung over Ea and enveloped the mouth of the Phasis and sank deep among the branches of the Mingrelian forest. Though the morning was chilly I should have forgotten it but for that mist and floating sea of fog. As under the flower leaf there often lurks an asp, and in the honey of Pontus is poison: so under the green leaves and clouds of foliage where countless warblers nestle, there are congeries of slime-covered marshes, which exhale a most poisonous air, productive of a pernicious type of ague. The shore road also is like a narrow creek of gruelly mud, and the slime harbours hosts of frogs who growled at us as if their very existence depended upon it.

We reached the terminus of the railroad after a

journey of eight miles. These eight miles of railway had occupied nearly two years in construction! The engineers told me that the embankment was finished all the way to Tiflis, and that the railroad would be across the Rion at Kutais before September next. As I looked upon the sluggish movements of the natives, and the all-the-same-to-me air of my English friends, I could not help thinking of that trained and disciplined army of workmen under General Casement I had seen laying down the Union Pacific Railroad. Spade and pick, hammer and axe, timed to the sonorous grind of the locomotive which ever rolled westward. Eight miles in two years in Mingrelia! Four and a half miles a day in America!

The steamer continued up the Rion on her way to Orperi. One cannot say much about its low banks on a damp, foggy day, and the possibilities of an attack of ague were ever in the perspective. I heard a chant or a hymn, which was at once lively and monotonous, increasing with wonderful harmony to the highest pitch of crescendo, then suddenly subsiding to the minimum of diminuendo. It was like the song of the Swiss Alps at one time, at another it was like the seguidilla of the Andalusian. The vocal music came from the boatmen of the Rion who were floating down on a barge laden with dry ash logs to Poti, which were destined for Europe, where they would be ultimately converted into boys' tops, shoemakers' lasts, and wheel spokes.

On board the Rion steamer there were many

chances of observing a number of new people. There were the handsome Mingrelian and gazelle-eyed Imeritian youth, countrymen of the warrior-prophet Schamyl, mountaineers from the far eastern country of Daghestan, the eunuchs of the Skoptsi sect, the Russian serf, struggling to assert his individuality among the crowd of haughty Georgians and Circassians; sweet-faced women from Gouriel, and aristocratic officers from St. Petersburg, bound to their posts in the Caucasus; Cossacks, Tartars and Armenians, besides Persians.

Not even in Constantinople, or in cosmopolite Alexandria, were so many varied physiognomies, characteristics and costumes assembled within so small a compass. It was heterogeneity made heterogeneous. Out of the hundred passengers I distinguished fifty nationalities. The costumes on board were a medley of all colours, like the tabard of a herald. The movement of the fifty different head-dresses was like a tuft of vari-coloured feathers complicated by a strong wind. It was a riot of colours. There was the Tartar's woolly cap, like a Hindustanee soup-pot inverted, rimless, bulging out in the middle; there was the Armenian priest's, like an army coffee-pot, minus its handle and lid; there was the Cossack's pitch-black hairy head-dress, rising upon the soldier's head like a Turkish watch-tower above the mountains; there was the Persian's, tall as a section of a stove-pipe, and black and smooth as when it is black-leaded and polished; there was the

Daghestan hat, rivalling the Persian in height, but much more terrible to look at, just as much as the broad-beamed man-of-war, with tiers of gun nozzles peeping out from her sides, is more awful than the elegant, slim, fruit-trading vessel; there was the Georgian hat, like the leaning tower of Pisa, but black and smooth as velvet; there was the towering hat of Mingrelia, which was an attempt at an improvement upon the Georgian, to relieve it of its sombre hue by making the crown of red cloth. There were many other hats there: hats of all sorts, except the hat of Fortunatus.

I will not attempt to describe the costumes, for they were more diverse than the hats—from the close-fitting Frank trousers to the flowing pants of Persia and Turkey. These people of the Caucasus are as fond of play of colours as the coloured "gals" of Louisiana, and with their handsome noble faces peeping above their cunning embroidery and rich clothes, no one can object to their tastes. Every man on board, however, was almost uniform in his choice of arms, for to every man's waist, belted with a rich zone of gold or silver, was slung the long pointed dagger of the Caucasus. These are the daggers which strangers buy in the bazaars of Stamboul, where they pay heavy prices for them, but if they but knew whence they really came, and how cheap they are in the Caucasus, they might, perhaps, extend their journey to the "sublime land of Kaf" if they had a mind to stock an armoury.

In all my travels in the Crimea I was accompanied by a large company of officers and soldiers. The military were also well represented on board the Rion steamer. Soldiers are inevitable in Russia. The officers conversed mostly in French with me respecting the merits of their men. They declared their soldiers were superior with the bayonet to the English, and that they had frequently exhibited that superiority before the trenches of Sevastopol! I wonder how many nations in this world claim that same superiority as peculiarly their own? The Southern soldiers claimed that one "Secesh" was equal to four "Yankees" with the bayonet. The "Yankees" after Gettysburg claimed that they were best at that game. The French boast before Waterloo was that their soldiers were the champions of the bayonet, but on the summit of Mont St. Jean alas for French renown with the bayonet! The Swiss have claimed the same superiority; the Spaniards even have claimed it; the Turks claim it; and I know by personal observation of the Spaniards at the siege of Valencia, and the Turks in Crete, that the forte of both nations is behind trees, rocks and mattresses.

The Russians had not yet arrived at that philosophic stage that I had, for I asserted dogmatically that with the bayonet no nation has the pre-eminence; that success by the bayonet is entirely governed by circumstances.

The Russian officers did not set me down as an ignoramus, which I had half expected, but listened

politely and smiled; but I am sure they were not convinced. The Russian officers almost all speak French; many of them speak English and German. They asked me what I thought of the capabilities of the Russians to speak foreign languages? I replied that I had been struck by the number of people in Russia who knew French, English and German.

"But do you not think," said they, "that the Russians, owing to the difficult languages they speak, are more capable of learning foreign languages than any other?"

"Oh, no! not a bit of it," I replied. "The reason why more Russians speak foreign languages is obvious. They have no cause as yet to boast of their advancement in literature, like the Germans, the French, the English, or the Americans. You have had poets, such as Derzhavin, Dmitreiv and Pushkin; you have had essayists, such as Novikoff and Karamsin, and historians like Lomonosov, Karamzin, Solovieff, and you have had several comedians and actors of no mean merit. But, pardon me, those writers have not written everything that is necessary for a cultivated man to know; hence, when you witness 'Faust' you begin to study German in order to know more of its great author. You have no such poet as Shakespeare, as he is produced but once in 500 years, hence you study English to know him; so also you must study French to know Molière, Voltaire, Racine, Corneille, Rousseau and Victor Hugo, just as we study Greek to know

Homer in his native language, or Latin to know Virgil and Horace."

By the time we had finished our animated discussions about such subjects, our steamer arrived at Orperi, which was her destination, and is the furthest point up the Rion to which the steamers ascend. Had I known something of Russian customs in the Caucasus I certainly should have left Orperi by diligence for Kutais within an hour after my arrival. But being entirely ignorant of how certain things were managed at Orperi, I was left behind houseless and friendless in a most aguish place, and to assist my imagination I learned that it is the Siberia of the Caucasus for those who emasculate themselves.

Hither all the military Skoptsi are banished, not to hard labour, but to form a colony by themselves, separate and apart from other people. These white eunuchs have the same peculiarities as their dark-faced species at Constantinople and Cairo ; they are extremely tall, slim, thin-voiced and beardless. But between the causes which made these white men of Orperi and the guards of the harem, eunuchs, there is a vast difference. The white men operate of their own free will, while the harem eunuchs have the operation performed on them by their captors.

When I asked a Russian gentleman what idea was it that induced these men to inflict such a terrible punishment upon their persons, he replied coolly, as if he had discussed the question many times before and had arrived at a satisfactory understanding of it.

He said it was a most philosophical idea; that the religion of the eunuchs was most logical, and I, after hearing his reasons, came to be of the same opinion, and believe it to be just as rational as was a lay Jesuit of the Asturias, who once told me that the bread and wine partaken of at the Communion Table, after being consecrated by the priest, became the incarnate body and real blood of Christ.

The origin of this sect sprang from the same causes which induced Luther and the myriad of sects after him to differ from the Catholics of the Roman Church. The founder of it, Danila, interpreted a Scriptural verse too literally, and according to this verse few men dare to dispute their claim to having acted with true religious faith. Christ, in His Sermon on the Mount, said that whosoever looked upon a woman with an adulterous eye had already committed adultery in his heart, and enjoined on men if any members of their bodies offended, to pluck the said sinful members out, for it was better that one member should perish rather than the whole body should be in danger of hell fire. The Skoptsi have understood these verses literally, and have acted upon them to the abscission even of those members which propagate the human species.

The patriarch Nicon, in the times of Alexius Mikhailovitch, took it upon himself to correct the errors that had crept into the holy books, and to have them reprinted and distributed to the masses. The missals and prayer-books used in the Greek Church

were, in his opinion, open to improvement, as well as the pictures of saints and holy images, which were, in fact, but senseless daubs, manufactured in the early days of the empire. This attempt of Nicon created a good deal of confusion among the ignorant and fanatical, who imagined him about to subvert the writings of holy men whom they had been taught to consider as immaculate heretofore, and he began to be regarded by them as an Antichrist. Those who refused to acquiesce in the innovations introduced by Nicon, formed themselves into a sect which came to be known as Staro-briatsi, or men of conservative ideas, and by the orthodox people they were called Rascolniki, or seceders.

The Staro-briatsi adhered to the old forms, and preferred to believe in their holy books as their forefathers had done before them. Out of this new sect sprang a variety of sects, two of which were particularly distinguished for the literal construction they placed upon Scripture. These men were the Skoptsi and the Bijellya Golubi, or "White Pigeons." The former cut off their members; the latter cut off and ate the breasts of young virgins and drank the blood that dripped from the flesh, believing that in this manner they followed more closely the words of the text, "Take, eat, for this is My body." Whenever a young virgin is found, they hail her as Virgin Mary, and try to persuade her that she will reach Heaven quicker by voluntarily sacrificing herself for the operation. This is all done in the zealous belief that this

communion is more efficacious than by eating bread and drinking wine, which, as they believe, cannot by any amount of consecration be transformed into actual flesh and blood. This latter sect is found principally in Siberia and northern European Russia.

Latterly the Skoptsi sect was rapidly gaining proselytes, until the Emperor Nicholas put a stop to their zeal by transporting them as soon as they were convicted to the inhospitable region of Orperi and the swamps of Mingrelia. The present emperor is still more earnest in punishing these unfortunate fanatics.

At Orperi a story is told of how a spy was tempted by a large reward to discover their secret meetings and inform upon those who still practised emasculation. He begged to be admitted into their sect, which was granted, and a night was appointed when the last and final ceremony should be performed. In the meantime, the spy informed the authorities where and when the operation would be performed, and a detachment of soldiers was to proceed to the place, and at a given signal were to rush in and seize those within. The night came, the majority of the Skoptsi were assembled in a house which was a short distance from Orperi, prayers were read, after which a long narrow table was brought into the chapel from an ante-chamber, and the spy was requested to strip and place himself on the table in presence of the congregation. After he had lain down he was firmly bound to the table, and the operator, dressed like a priest in full robes, took up his instruments and pre-

pared to consummate that which would admit the spy into the brotherhood of the Skoptsi. At this moment the spy gave the preconcerted signal, and the soldiers on the watch outside rushed to the door. But the outer door had been locked and barricaded, as the brotherhood had become acquainted with the spy's intentions, and before the soldiers could break it, despite the struggles and shrieks of the hapless man, the deed was performed, and he was for ever an eunuch.

According to their customs the parents can only have one child. This is the furthest limit which they allow themselves, after which they are both rendered incapable.

It was unpleasant to see my military friends seated in the diligence and myself left behind, knowing but half a dozen words of Russian. It was sufficient to give any one the ague to look at the grey clouds above, to feel the wet drizzle and damp, and hear the chant of countless bull-frogs and their innumerable progeny; to see the slimy mud and wet wooden cottages around. My knowledge of Turkish was of use to me here, as it was in the Crimea, for there are a number of Tartars in Orperi, and there exists but a slight difference between Tartar and Turkish. As there was a hotel at Orperi, it consoled me for the want of friends. Had the conductor of the diligence been my friend, or had I met him but two or three days before and given him a cigar or tea money, he would have reserved a seat for me. Had I but

telegraphed from Poti to the conductor, I should have had a seat. Or, had the conductor done his duty, I should have obtained a seat ; for the passengers who travel first class by the steamers on the Rion are entitled to the choice of seats in the diligence. It was fortunate for me that there was a hotel at Orperi, otherwise, the disgusting black ooze had been my bed that night.

A white eunuch carried my baggage to the hotel. That beggarly cabin at Orperi a hotel! There were four rooms in the cabin — one of which had a creaking bedstead, but no bed was let to me for the sum of seventy-five cents. It was cold as at Odessa in the latter part of February, but the fireplace was out of order, therefore I could have no fire. With the resolution to endure, I laid myself on the creaking bedstead, though it was but five o'clock in the afternoon, and am proud to say I slept—slept until five o'clock next morning. But let every traveller beware of the horrors of Orperi. Orperi reminded me of that Eden where Mark Tapley and Martin Chuzzlewit developed their true characters. For the sum of $4.35 I secured a private carriage to take me to Kutais. By this act of extravagance I secured many admirers, for it was the only private carriage in Orperi.

Ten minutes after leaving the station of the Skoptsi exiles the sun gradually appeared, striking the earth hotly, scattering the dun clouds and drizzling mist and chills of winter, and tinting each tree and leaf and

shrub and flower with the hues of spring. I was glad of this, otherwise I should have been sceptical as to whether the sun ever shone above Orperi.

I was driving through Imeritia on my journey from Orperi to Kutais. Imeritia is much more pleasant to live in than Mingrelia, but in the matter of beauty of the women both provinces are much the same, though perhaps Mingrelia ought to obtain the palm. But the people of Imeritia and Mingrelia have lately intermarried, ever since the possession of the country by the Russians. It is the male sex only in Imeritia that is pre-eminent in beauty above all the nations of the Caucasus.

The aspect of the country is lovely in spring and summer. The shrubs and plants, rhododendrons and brier bushes seem to spring up spontaneously. The ground is quite level up to Kutais, and the soil is of the richest which the Caucasus possesses. The Rion flows through the centre of the valley, which is about twenty miles broad between Orperi and Kutais. The Caucasus bounds it northwardly, and its many peaks and gullies, covered with snow, stand out in bold relief. Running easterly, parallel with the Caucasus, is another and much lower range, which is well covered with timber and all manner of herbs and plants, for even to this day Colchis, as in the days of old, is famous for poisonous and medicinal herbs. In the neighbourhood of Kutais the valley becomes an undulating country, hill rises above hill, knoll shoulders knoll, with pretty little hollows lying be-

tween, and picturesque spots all around, a piece of an old castle crowning one spur, and a bit of interesting ruin adorning another. The river Rion cleaves its way between the hills, and as it leaves its hill world behind, dashes grandly and clamorously to the broad, level valley, churning itself into the whiteness of snow as it rushes over its stony bed.

Before entering Kutais I had to pay toll for using the road which the Government had been at so much pains to make. Soldiers were the toll-gatherers. Half a mile beyond the toll-gate the town of Kutais is seen, situated on both sides of the river. My first view of it embraced a broken-down bridge, a church in process of construction, two other churches glorious in green paint and swelling domes, a multitude of houses and trees, the latter so numerous that they hide more than one-half the town from a first view.

It was in this town I first began to enjoy life in the Caucasus. I found myself in good society. There were hotels, one of which might compete with any in Paris for the excellence of its cuisine. This was the Hôtel de France, kept by a Frenchman, and fronted the great square of the city. Kutais is intensely civilised, and glories in its refinement and taste. It claims to be the Lyons of the Caucasus—not in manufactures, but in wealth, cleanliness, position, influence; Tiflis, of course, being the Paris of the Caucasus. Every afternoon, when the coolness of the day has begun, every dame and gentle girl in the town begin their promenade, in imitation of the mode which

prevails in Western Europe. Then begins, and continues until nightfall, the by-play of full feathered coquettes. I calmly contemplate all this while sitting in an iron chair in the Grand Square.

I had a letter of introduction to the Governor, Count Levaschoff, from General Ignatieff, at Constantinople. The count was a pure Russian ; his lady, the countess, was a born ruler of society. The count was a veritable Robert of Paris, his countess a perfect Brenhilda. Both ruled Kutais by smiles. When they smiled, all Kutais smiled. If they frowned, then Kutais put on mourning.

A soirée and a concert was given the second night of my arrival to the upper class of Kutais, and I was invited.

The collection of well-dressed gentlemen and ladies was something remarkable. When I first saw Kutais after passing the toll-gate, I remember I muttered to myself, "Oh, a second-rate town, military station, perhaps ; shall only stop for to-day." But I had under-estimated Russia and the Russians. I had mentally classed her people as being only a little superior to the Turks, but I was much mistaken.

I was astonished at the number of princes and princesses present at the soirée. One princess sang a native song of the Caucasus. That native tune I have heard everywhere : heard it from our camel-driver at Assûan ; heard it from a poor old woman who mourned her husband at the station of Goom-Gooma, in Abyssinia ; heard it often from the frail

fair of Cairo; heard it at a wedding feast in Jerusalem; heard it in La Mancha and Andalusia; heard it in Crete; heard it from all the southern nations, from those people of the dark eyes and sallow faces; and I know I shall hear it in Persia and India, whither I wend. And yet it is a native song in Georgia; "It is a song of the country," said Count Levaschoff to me in explanation. We never hear this tune in any land of light skins and blue eyes. It is not to be heard in Circassia, but it is heard south of the Caucasus, in Georgia and Armenia.

A prince helped the princess with a deep, deep voice, and a young princess sustained her part with a very thin, girlish voice. Everybody clapped their hands, and the two princesses hid their faces with their fans. The ladies were dressed like the natives of the country. A small, round turban cap, made of fine straw, bordered all round with artificial flowers, and a veil thrown over it, is the head-dress. I saw expansive pantaloons of red silk, and bodices of blue cloth, richly embroidered and set off with gold lace, wherever a bit could be attached.

After this trio had concluded the two children of the Governor walked up to the platform to play their part. The boy had quite a Young America air about him; the girl—tall for her age—was extremely shy. The children were heartily applauded. There were a number of pieces played, and songs and glees sung of sufficient length, excellence and variety to please the most fastidious.

Kutais, a town of 12,000 inhabitants, contains nothing of sufficient interest or importance to detain the traveller, but it is celebrated for being the place where Medea was born. I found no traces of the Colchian magician who formed the subject of the tragedy written by Euripides. The town was anciently called Cyta, afterwards Cyteis, hence the word Kutais.

I must not, however, omit mentioning that when I reached Kutais the whole town was in a zealous frame of mind for the celebration of the good old days of Easter, according to the orthodox mode. This is by keeping up a continual tintinnabulation with the bells, great and small. The ringers were soldiers, who relieved each other every other hour. Another is by eating tall plum cakes, remarkable for the scarcity of plums in them. The inhabitants had also invested much money in new clothes and in ornaments for the gentler sex, so that Easter Sunday was ushered in with great *éclat* at Kutais—plum cakes, coloured eggs, new clothes, and din of clamouring bells much conducing thereto.

"Christ is risen," said everybody in Kutais, as they kissed each other on the cheek. "Christ is risen," said the little boys, saluting their young friends with the profound gravity of their seniors. "Christ is risen," said the women and the young girls, and they also kissed heartily the cheeks of their friends, neighbours, and relatives.

A great many people went about the street fifing

away vigorously, accompanied by others playing upon a one-stringed violin, creating such music as Pan did with his syrinx in the woods of Arcadia. Others celebrated the day with thrumming on a shallow tambour, and added to this was the well-known street organ. I watched with curiosity a party of Georgians disporting with the agility of fawns upon a green hill. It was very like the dog dance of the Cheyennes. There were also many voices lifted in the streets late at night, in much the same style—and I am certain from the same cause—as fast young men when they sing at unreasonable hours, "We won't go home till morning." There were the usual resorts of the rising generation to while away the holiday hours, such as flying kites, playing marbles and revolving in cradles, and riding wooden horses round a circle.

The women of Imeritia were out in the quiet and most retired streets, moving their limbs to the heavy languorous dance of their country. Their pastime of clapping hands and heaving limbs was but a tame business, though the pure complexion, the voluptuousness of their forms and wonderful eyes were great attractions. Each day of Easter Week ended with clink of castanets, ringing of bells, blowing of fifes and bugles, roll of tambours, merri-makes, music and songs.

On leaving Kutais I advanced to a region which is only one of the many boasts of the Caucasus. The first hour of the journey developed a new scene to me. Miles upon miles of green knolls rose round us, and

between each knoll there were the most lovely little hollows, rich with flowers.

"Is not this a happy country?" asked my companion, M. de Heering, of the Imperial Life Guards. This officer and myself had engaged a tarantasse—a springless vehicle—in external appearance like an ordinary cab—between us, to convey us as far as Tiflis, so as to reduce a trifle the heavy expense which every one must incur who travels in the Caucasus.

It is a long distance to Tiflis from Kutais—more than 240 versts, equal to 160 miles. The scenery which meets the eye is most varied. It consists of upland and meadow, wide and waving corn-fields, rocky slopes, fertile river bank and grey, bare crags, deep defiles, picturesque passes, and the eternal Caucasus always in sight. Then there are the white stations of the Government, which are provided for those travellers who have obtained a *podorojna*, or permit, from the authorities to travel; the Tartar villages, of which there are a great number and always interesting; the castled hills and ruins of Georgian fortresses; the roaring, impetuous river Rion; the ploughmen at their work, with their patient oxen; the long, long caravans of camels which we frequently met, the queer little donkeys and their submissive-looking drivers; Cossack couriers and constant waves of travellers, are sights that astonish, amuse, and relieve the tedium of the journey.

After ascending the slope of a mountain for some

time, we gained the summit of Mount Perenga, whence one of the main feeders of the river Rion takes its rise, and we had an admirable view of the country which we had just left, and the high plateau of the South Caucasus, which stretched before us towards Tiflis. The best description and by far the shortest of the route to Tiflis from Poti would be to say that from Poti you ascend by slow degrees the valley of the Rion to Mount Perenga, and then descend by a much more gentle descent the valley of the Kûr, or the ancient Cyrus ; but this method of description would furnish no idea of its characteristics.

In the Pass of Suram was a regiment of soldiers doing penance—that is, they had been sent hither to work on the railroad for misbehaviour, and for a term were reduced to the level of ordinary navvies. Considering the immense and valuable labour performed by them, I thought it a capital plan to thus dispose of insubordinate soldiers, and navvy labour in the Pass of Suram ought to be preferred to exile in Siberia. The time has gone by when Russia drilled her soldiers to railway making ; she only tasks criminals in that way now.

Suram itself is the next post beyond that of Mount Perenga. It is a considerable town, very quiet, and has a decided uncommunicative look about it which may be owing, perhaps, to the low, squat form of the houses. It has a castle leaning over the slope and spreading over the top of a beetling rock which stands close to the town.

Gori is also famous for a castle which is like a "rock upon a rock," superbly cresting a lofty round hill in the town. The Kûr spreads itself over an immense breadth just above the town, then having reunited all its branches and straggling arteries just below, sweeps grandly, under an old Georgian bridge, towards Tiflis, four stages distant. This district is Georgia. Imeritia is passed when the traveller crosses the crest of Perenga Mountain.

The town of Misbetka, celebrated in former times as having been the residence of the Kings of Georgia, was reached by our galloping team just at nightfall. There are two monasteries of the Greek period at this place, at one of which the Kings of Georgia were wont to be crowned and where the Bishops are now consecrated.

Perenga Mountain marks the division between forest scenery and grey nakedness. To the west of Perenga flourish the most splendid ash and elm trees and luxuriant vegetation. The cabins of the people are all built of wood. To the east of Perenga one may search in vain for trees, save those which some shade-loving Tartar has planted by his house, or where a small plantation and pretty grove tell of an abundance of water. And from the eastern slope of Perenga to Misbetka we observe the verdure fading before the approach of sterility and grey rocks and white clay hills.

As the station of Misbetka is but one stage from Tiflis, we could not restrain our impatience, so we

called for a fresh team and taranta, and continued our journey in the darkness. It was a good road, I know, for the wheels rolled smoothly. We were conscious of tall bluffs on either side of us, of a roaring, rapid river being to our left; finally we saw lights flickering in the far distance, far below us, which came out brighter and brighter as we approached. We rolled at last through the wide streets of Tiflis, which were lit up with petroleum lamps, and halted before the wide portals of the courtyard of the Hôtel de l'Europe.

Tired with the drive of 160 miles, which we had made in two days, my fellow traveller and myself bid a mutual "Good-night," and turned bedward.

CHAPTER XII.

Tiflis—Its Boulevards, Squares, Bazaars, Opera House, Oriental and Occidental Quarters—What the Russians have been Doing in the Caucasus.

TIFLIS, *May 7th*, 1870.

BEFORE reaching Tiflis I had no more idea of what it was like than any one of your hundred thousand readers who have never crossed the Atlantic. I had an impression that it stood on a mountain, that the Georgians and Circassians rode through its city in caps of steel, and armour (I am sure I have seen such a thing stated), that there were Jews on the look-

out to kidnap handsome girls to sell to the Sultan and Pachas at Stamboul. My visit has considerably enlightened me.

The more modern portion of Tiflis, which only dates from the Russian acquisition of the Caucasus, is European in style, with broad streets and roomy sidewalks, and flanked by three-storied and balconied houses. Shops occupy the lower floor, and the dwelling rooms are above them.

The main boulevard of Tiflis is about 150 feet wide. Other streets are 100, 75, and 50 and 40 feet wide. The shops contain almost every necessary of life, and are principally owned by Russians, Jews, Germans, Italians and French.

Place d'Erivan is supposed to be the centre of the city. It is about 300 yards long by 150 at its widest. In the middle of it is seen a special feature of Tiflis in the shape of a huge building, which is at once a two-storied bazaar, containing about a thousand shop alcoves, and an opera house. The bazaar was built by the Russians, and is a strong and substantial structure. A walk through the bazaar reveals the wonderful mixture of nations and variety of languages to be found in Tiflis. The people carry their nationalities upon their faces, their costume, manner and bearing, also betray them. They cannot lose their traditional characteristics. Thus the Georgians are proud of their bearing, the Circassians and Lesghians of their courage and spirit, the Daghestans of their agility on their mountains, the Armenians of their

tact in trade, and the Mingrelians of their elegant forms and slim waists. The Persians pride themselves upon the beauty of the land of Iran, the Tartars upon the traditional victories achieved by Genghis Khan and Timur Leng, and so on *ad infinitum*. These are some of the people who elbow and jostle you at every step you take.

I had read that the Georgian women were the "handsomest in the world," but I really must dissent. They have fine black eyes and pretty regular features, and generally good complexions and figures, but "handsomest in the world" is an extravagant phrase. Though I do not wish to be severe on the fair creatures, but if I may be allowed to say it, their faces are a little too broad, and cheek-bones too high, to deserve the term "handsomest;" but as mothers of a fine race, the women have reason to be proud. For if extreme beauty is rare, vulgar features are no less so.

The articles for sale in the shop windows and bazaars enable one to judge of the opulence and taste of the inhabitants. Now in this great bazaar of Place d'Erivan there are hundreds of little open shops, two-thirds of which are for the sale of nothing else than Manchester prints, and handkerchiefs of florid pattern; the remaining third sell silk goods, pins and needles, hooks and eyes, gold braid and thread of all colours, cigarettes, Turkish tobacco, tobacco-pouches, a few bamboo pipes, toys, maps, stationery, coarse cloth, toilet requisites, and general "cheap Jack" trumpery.

The Opera House is most handsome; the walls are decorated in Oriental style, green colours predominating. The chairs within are roomy and even luxurious.

Italian and Russian troupes play alternately. It is proved to have been a wise plan of the Government to subsidise this Opera House. I believe that the sum paid for the two seasons is 50,000 roubles. The admission price to the boxes is one rouble and a half, to the pit one rouble. The receipts per night, I am told, average 125 roubles.

A market is held every morning in the east part of Erivan Square, opposite the Hotel Europe, where hay and wood is sold. A little lower down to the right of the Circassian Seminary is the soldiers' market.

South of the Erivan Square is the old town of Tiflis huddled distrustfully under the Acropolis. It is called the Oriental quarter and is given up to Persians, Armenians and the Caucasian tribes, who prefer being in close view of the old wall which defended their fortifications so long from the Tartars and Russians. They have probably become attached to it for the same reason that Judah's sons love the walls of Jerusalem. The streets are tortuous, narrow and filthy, the pavements are in a most primitive state, and the shops are mere open stalls.

The number of bazaars and caravanserais in old Tiflis is very large, which speaks well for the trade carried on between it and the countries of the East. Much richer and gayer stuffs may be found there

than in the bazaar of Erivan Place. Each bazaar has two or three outlets, which lead to lanes, devoted to as many exclusive trades. In the shoe lane, shoes of all sorts, sizes, and colours are made; in the next lane are only smithies, where all kinds of iron work are manufactured. Another lane is wholly given up to the sale of saddles, bridles and saddlebags; and in the next to it are arms of all kinds, from the bell-mouthed blunderbuss to the ladies' ornamented dagger, and from the eight-foot musket to the iron-pointed staff. In the lane beyond we find nothing but ornaments of gold and silver for the arms, fingers, toes, wrists, neck, waist, ears and head, which comprise all sorts of odd things, for the Caucasians are curious in their personal decorations.

The caravanserais contain the produce which the numerous caravans bring from Persia by way of Erivan. This generally consists of raw silk and cotton.

In the Oriental quarter may also be found the natural hot sulphurous baths for which Tiflis is famous. They are frequented at all hours by the sick for the sake of the medicinal properties of the water. Those who visit the baths merely for amusement prefer the morning hours. As the water is strongly impregnated with sulphur its odour is not sweet.

Tiflis affords as much amusement and comfort as any second-rate town or city in Europe. The boulevards and streets (of the new portion) are on a magnificent scale, and the park and evening prome-

nade grounds, and botanic gardens, are well worth seeing.

When the Russians entered Tiflis it was supposed to have obtained a population of about 30,000, but it is now said to be over 120,000. Being the head-quarters of the army of the Caucasus, it attracts even for that reason considerable trade. All the roads throughout the country start from Tiflis, and have been constructed with the view of establishing easy and direct means of military communications from the capital to the various provinces.

Paris merchants receive large orders from Armenian merchants of Tiflis, and Germany and Switzerland are often called upon to contribute to the wants and taste of peoples who not long ago were contented to subsist on the simplest fare, and in the most primitive manner.

Such articles as confections, muslins, dimity, wines, are extensively imported from Paris. The French barber and hairdresser finds profitable employment every morning from Georgian princesses, and I find that the fancy for French boots and ravishing costumes is as general here as in New York.

The hotels, of which there are several, are kept by Frenchmen. All the most expensive things sold in the capital come from France. The Germans have the monopoly of cheaper ware, of pins, needles, thread, buttons, and iron articles, and such like. The most expensive things of German make found in Tiflis are saddles and harness, but having had occasion

to examine the saddlery shops of the capital, I was struck with their meanness. Real English saddles I am sure would sell well, as the Russian officers go to the trouble of importing them *viâ* St. Petersburg.

In return for their wines, the French import walnut, and ash, and raw silk, and indefatigable representatives of French firms are met with throughout the Caucasus drumming-up business for their employers.

I read a book lately, called "Travels in the Causasus, including visits to Ararat," etc., written by some members of the Alpine Club, concerning their adventures and opinions of the Government of the Caucasus.

About their adventures I have nothing to say, but their opinions I must condemn as nonsense.

They state that they cannot conceive what the Russians have been doing during their half century's occupation of the Caucasus, that so far as they have seen the Russians have done nothing for the civilisation of the Caucasus.

Is it nothing to have reduced these ninety tribes of the Caucasus to submission? This one task, which has been done most effectually, seems to me marvellous.

No less admirable have been their efforts to consolidate their conquests, to incorporate the country with the empire, to combine all the discordant elements of the country for the natural good of all.

The religions of the people have been respected,

their cherished temples have been protected from the bigotry of the Russian peasants. The people have been taught that they are capable of better things than slaughtering one another for petty local jealousies, which were handed down by tradition. They are permitted to retain their own customs, their own language, their own dress; in no way have they been restrained from following whatever legitimate business they desired. It is true that they are prevented under penalty of Siberian exile from selling their own children, from committing depredations upon each other, from committing any violence against their neighbours, just as much as all Russians are. They may no more seek the highways to harass travellers, and prey upon commerce; but they must set to work, cultivate their farms, and look after their own lawful affairs and business. But then such things are essentially the duties of the best governments.

That a final end has been put to barbarity and feudalism (which terms are almost synonymous) in this country may be seen by looking at the hill towers and mountain fortresses which now lie silent and tottering to ruin. Where are the people who inhabited those places, at the sight of which travellers trembled? The chieftains occupy prominent positions in the army under the civil government; the peasants till their land, and their children are in schools. This is a much happier state of things than the barbarous condition in which the Russians found them.

In a year the locomotive will sound its note along

the now silent defiles of the Caucasus, and will be housed within the capital, and a year later it will be heard on the shores of the Caspian startling the peasants on the banks of the Araxes. No, it is altogether untrue that the Russians stand still in the Caucasus.

TO THE CASPIAN SEA.

CHAPTER XIII.

Tiflis to Bakû—Post Travel—Modern Troglodytes—The Steppe—How Brigands are Treated—Elizavethpol—Chemakha—Malaghan—A Lesson in Geology—The Caspian Sea.

TURKESTAN, *June 24th*, 1870.

BETWEEN Tiflis and Bakû are 560 versts, or 360 miles.

Travelling by post in Caucasian Russia is expensive, though not more so than stage-travelling in America. The price paid by me for a comfortable carriage, and three fresh horses every ten-mile stage, was 150 roubles in currency, which is about equal to 80 dollars in gold. In addition to this I was to give a slight bakshish to every driver on his arrival at a station, and as there were thirty-two stations marked out, the bakshish would amount to a considerable sum; and then the government courier, who was deputed to accompany me, to act as my interpreter, forager, and protector, was entitled to a small gratuity

at the end of the journey. Altogether the sum paid for expenses would amount to 110 dollars in gold.

A last piece of advice was given to me by Baron Nicolay to the effect that I must look sharp, keep my arms in order, and trust in God and the Russian Government. There was much personal danger, he added, as the Tartars scrupled not to attack anybody worth the trouble, and if they caught me I might end my life as a slave among the Tekies of Turkestan. The General may have been chaffing me; elderly folks are often prone to this amusement when they meet raw youth.

The final arrangements made, with a government *poderojna* doubly sealed in my possession, my conductor, who was a man of note, and of few words, nodded his head, and three fat horses—they are always fat on the first stage—bounded off under the touch of a long raw hide thong, while hundreds of people fastened their eyes upon the traveller, who was about to journey *à la courierski*.

A traveller of this kind appears to possess special privileges; he may gallop his horses through crowded streets, and all other horses, waggons, carriages, must make way, while the carriage bells ring a continuous warning. When he arrives at a station, the master must meet him and salute; he may take the best room in the station, and if he finds a traveller with only an ordinary *poderojna* just starting, and there are no other horses left, he may take his horses and harness them to his own carriage, and in the days of

Nicholas he could shoot him if he resisted the double-sealed *poderojna;* at least, such a thing has been done, and the offender promoted for his energy.

My grief at parting with the friendly ladies of Tiflis vanished quickly under the influence of the rapid open-air drive. The artisans of Tiflis were at their gold filigree work; the smithies resounded with the tin-tan of their hammers; there was eager trade in the bazaars; Tartars were tending their droves of cattle and sheep in the markets; soldiers were marching to their duties as we drove through the streets. We had just time to look at the venerable Armenian churches of St. David and the Annunciation, bid a last adieu to the suburb of Avlabar, to the ruined towers, solitary and silent, on the Acropolis, and drop a glance at the turbid Kûr careering through its narrow chasm, when we issued out at the end of the last street and beheld the far-stretching steppes before us.

Our road lay along the right bank of the Kûr River, which as it found a broader channel through the plain glided smoothly towards the Caspian. We reached the first station, eight miles from Tiflis, in forty-six minutes, and from here obtained our farewell view of the Georgian capital.

On leaving the first station, we strike across a bridge and have the last sight of Tiflis, of civilisation, of green trees, and running water. We appear to be the only objects on the face of the wide expanse. At this time of the year the steppe is a solitude.

The station houses are substantial, and are buildings of stone, roofed over with tile. They contain four rooms, average size 15 feet by 12. The rooms are papered; each has a hearth and a couple of bedsteads, mere wooden settles three feet wide; the floors are always well boarded, and the doors and windows are in a respectable condition. They have broad verandas in front paved with red brick.

The Government is the proprietor of every station house, and for the convenience of travellers keep about twenty horses at each station, and two or three troicks.

The station staff consists of the superintendent, who is generally an old soldier with a family, two drivers, and two outside men. By engaging a troick one can travel much cheaper, but with greater discomfort, as the jolting is terrible in the springless vehicles. The traveller by troick must also change at every station, and the rough hauling of the baggage as it is shifted from one troick to another generally ends in serious loss.

If one is bound on a long journey it is always best to secure a good carriage, which the director can always supply to a post traveller. The hire is paid for the whole journey, and there is nothing more to pay, except the bakshish to the drivers.

Three horses are harnessed to the carriage. The shaft horse is generally a trotter, fully able to make his eight, nine, and ten miles an hour; the off horses travel on the gallop.

Over the shafts and just over and above the collar of the trotting horse is an upright bow of wood, to which are suspended a couple of bells, which keep up a furious peal for the purposes of warning people off the road, and to give notice to the station men to be at hand to change horses. If one is travelling post, his conductor shouts out "Courierski" or post, and as the carriage advances the stationmaster takes off his hat, and with his hat in one hand he advances to inspect the *poderojna* and post order, after reading which, if the traveller desires to proceed on his way, he hurries up his men and then retires to his office to note down the name of the traveller, and the time of his arrival, and also to specify how many horses he took. The time occupied in changing the horses does not exceed ten minutes. When they are ready the stationmaster with his hat in his hand comes to inform the traveller. The conductor and driver hasten to their places on the front seat, the horses receive the lash; away they bound, the bells begin their furious pealing again, and we leave the station with polite adieus.

Beyond the third station we see Tartar shepherds, who live in the earth like moles, and in the rocks like the Troglodytes of old.

The face of the land has changed its aspect. The solitary spurs of rock, thinly covered with earth, have been changed for hilly ranges; mere troughs have become well-defined valleys, whose bottoms are covered with fresh young grass and sheep flocks.

The road is excellent, and is kept in repair by

Tartars, whom we see breaking stones as on the highways in France, or bringing fresh loads of rock to lay along the roadside for the stonebreakers. Through one of the deepest valleys running east and west, the post road marks its whitened course through the Tartar land. Not a single house is to be seen, but in the valley, nevertheless, there are many shepherds who pipe to their flocks on reed fifes.

As the atmosphere clears I see many smoky columns issuing from the earth, as if the fair surface of the valley was a smouldering volcano.

We stop to examine these strange underground villages, and the Tartar patriarchs issue out of their coverts with their arms to demand our business. A little bakshish satisfies the chief among them, who, seeing that we are strangers, invites us to descend to his house. If you will imagine a square pit of the size of an ordinary hotel chamber roofed with earth, and an inclining trench 3 or 4 feet wide to descend to it, and in the earthen roof a small aperture for the smoke of the hearth fire to escape; then furnish the sunken cabin with half-a-dozen sheep-skins or calf-hides, half-a-dozen goats, a squaw with bracelets on her arms, a necklace of gold around her neck, and an anklet of the same yellow metal round her ankle, and half-a-dozen papooses adorned in the same way—you have a perfect picture of a house and family in Tartar-land.

After an inspection of the underground house we made our salaams and departed to continue our

journey. I should not forget to state that the Tartar women dress much better than the Indian squaws, and that some of the marriageable girls are really pretty, and their charms are heightened by a crimson costume and natty red caps with golden tassels.

We stopped for the night at the sixth station, a place called Aghistaffa from the stream which flows near. We had travelled 96 versts.

Between Tiflis and the Kharam, I was told the people seldom molest travellers "but from the Kharam to the Caspian Sea;" the conductor shook his head ominously, and bade us be on our guard, and advised us to take a Tartar escort.

Whatever reason there may be for it, I have noticed that the banditti of this country are more afraid of a couple of Cossacks or Tartar irregulars badly armed with flintlock muskets, than a group of civilised travellers armed with breechloaders.

The Cossack or Tartar escort are never expected to fight when they are outnumbered. They confine themselves to firing off their weapons, and making terrific demonstrations, after which they retreat in hot haste leaving the helpless traveller to what mercy may be shown to him. One reason for their conduct appears plausible. The escort represent their Government, they know the land and the tribes which dwell there, and as soon as an attack is made they return to inform their officers, who at once advance with a sufficient military force for the punishment of the

brigands, and in the end the tribe is banished from the pastures, and its chiefs are exiled to Siberia.

Aghistaffa is rather a pleasant station, half shaded by tall poplars. A mountain stream flows close by, which after a drive of 96 versts through a thirsty steppe appears refreshing. Fresh milk, shepherd cheese, *yaourt* or sour buttermilk, fresh eggs, good black bread, fowls and such appetising eatables may be obtained, and the country is populous and well cultivated in the neighbourhood. But I was unable to sleep a wink at Aghistaffa station on account of the myriads of ravenous insects.

We resumed our easterly journey long before sunrise. The cold breeze stormed past us, as we rushed along, and sparks struck from the flint hissed in the ear as they flew by into the black void. It was so dark that only by his vehemence of action and whirling lash could the figure of the driver be seen by me. But the driver was an old stager, and knew the road as well as he knew his own fingers.

At last a few gleams of the coming sunlight streaked against darkness and starlight, and shortly after the sun emerged in the shape of a melon-coloured globe, above the wavy line of the horizon, directly in front of us.

From Aghistaffa to Elizavethpol the steppe country is alternately a plain, a long valley, where irrigation is carried on to perfection by the Tartar shepherd farmers, or extensive downs. It is a well-watered country and of great fertility. Innumerable

flocks and herds browse on the short sweet grass. Waving fields of wheat, rye and barley, promised abundant harvests. There are no forests or groves; but as the Tartar Mussulman loves the shade of the tree as well as the Arab and the Turk, a few poplar trees may be seen here and there, near old-established villages.

The snowy top of the Caucasus was still visible now and then, but as the road seeks the easiest mode of reaching Bakû it soon recedes from sight.

The country around Elizavethpol is rather sterile, but the town itself is buried in a forest of fruit trees, mulberries, elms, and fig. Elizavethpol, called Gunja by the Persians when they were in possession of the country, has changed masters often and witnessed many reverses of fortune. Earthquakes have more than once toppled its walls, and hostile batteries of Persians and Russians have levelled many portions of it, while Tartar princes have often ravaged it. But the fort, almost intact, with its strong walls of red brick, is a worthy object of inspection. It is of Persian construction, and able to accommodate 2000 soldiers within its walls.

The town contains about 8000 inhabitants, and from the mixture of the races, each adhering to its own customs, religion, and costumes, is a more curious sight than even Tiflis.

The bazaars are as truly Oriental as any in Constantinople or Smyrna. The Conservative Tartars, as if in defiance of the Muscovites, cling to the antique

habits of their forefathers even more tenaciously than their brethren of the open steppe. Some of them can trace their descent from the warriors who followed Timur Leng to the Caucasus, and some are yet alive who were dandled on the knee by the warriors of the victorious Nadir-Shah; and among the Armenians are a few of those who escaped from Mohammed Aga's vengeance when he entered Tiflis as a conqueror. The Russians who migrated here have taken lasting root in the soil. It is said that whoever enters Elizavethpol must make up his mind to die there.

In the neighbourhood of the first station beyond Elizavethpol the country begins to improve. At the third station we come to the Kûr again, the same river I saw at Tiflis, but now much larger, capable of floating large river steamers.

Tiflis is supposed to be the hottest place north of the Persian Gulf. The sun in summer time rises as high as 130° Fahrenheit before 10.30 A.M., but I am rather inclined to think that the Kûr ferry station is even hotter than Tiflis.

No traveller delays long here. He hurries up his conductor, the conductor hurries up the station men, the driver hurries up the horses, and the latter, poor things, are hurried up by no gentle hand.

We cross the broad and deep Kûr and the scenery becomes richly pastoral again. It is now a softly undulating plain, green with fresh grass, studded with clumps of shrubbery, rhododendrons, wild azalea

flowers, pansies and tall sunflowers, while Tartar encampments occupy the most picturesque spots.

We heard the songs of cuckoos, nightingales, and larks, the lowing of cattle and neighing and whimpering of mares and their colts. The air was heavy with the fragrance of wild flowers, and sweet grass. The streams are numerous, and on their banks stalk the pelican ; and from the undergrowth issue with a loud whirr, as we drive past, coveys of quails ; while hares skim away by dozens at the sound of our wildly jangling horse bells.

Aksû, or White Water, our next station, is the twenty-second from Tiflis, and is 349 versts distant from that capital.

Aksû is praised by its people for its groves and shady dells ; and the fruits, vegetables and flowers, were certainly remarkable.

The road from Aksû to Chemakha winds across bold mountains, and from the altitude of 1000 feet above the plain the views are wide and extensive. As we drove along scores of happy scenes were presented to us of forests, gorges, mountains, lakes, springs, groves of ash, beech and elm, and luxuriant patches of wild grapes, blackberries and wortleberries. On lawn-like flats the cowslip seemed to burn the earth ; the daisy, honeysuckle, clover, thistle, and brier roses added a variety of colours. The wild fowl, pheasant, partridge, and occasionally deer, and antelope started out from the thick undergrowth.

Soon Chemakha is seen, a town which has undergone as many vicissitudes during the last few centuries as Elizavethpol. A softly sloping valley shaded by poplar groves through which flowed a mountain stream, and adorned by monuments, led up to the town. Chemakha is barely visible from the west, until we surmount the plateau on which it stands.

The ancient name of Chemakha was "Maximechia," and formerly contained 70,000 people, principally Tartars and Persians, who were engaged in the silk trade. But earthquake after earthquake visited it and tumbled down its walls, and at one time caused the death of about 8000 of its inhabitants.

A succession of disasters disheartened and scattered the people, and drove them to seek homes elsewhere. The seat of government was also removed, and established at Bakû. The town now professes to have a population of 20,000 chiefly Russians and Tartars, the latter being still engaged in the produce and manufacture of silk.

On the plateau where the town commences, is a fort which mounts twelve 24-pounders, and is garrisoned by two regiments of infantry, a battalion of cavalry, and a company of artillerists.

As we continued the journey eastward from Chemakha, an excellent view was obtained of the town. We met coming towards it the most primitive-looking carts, which appeared from a distance as if they were mounted on stilts. They proved to be ordinary one-horse carts moving on wheels from eight

to ten feet in diameter. We met many caravans of donkeys, mules and camels, more frequently than before.

Two stations beyond Chemakha is Malaghan, which is inhabited by a singular community of Russian Agnostics who keep no fasts, and acknowledge no saints. They do not believe that the Bible was written by inspired persons to whom God had spoken, but that it is written by ordinary men, who possessed the poetic talent, and the gift of writing their poetry down, just as modern poets have done.

The settlement is about a mile long and consists of two parallel lines of houses, with a wide avenue between.

Each house has its own separated lot and enclosure of about 100 feet square. All the houses are gable-roofed and front the street endways.

Beyond Malaghan the country assumes a desert-like aspect.

The transition from verdure to sterility, from spontaneous vegetation to unsightly rock and dull plain, was sudden. An hour after this we were driving through a rift in the plain, grey, dry, rocky slope on either side of us. In looking at the curious stretch of sloping rock wall on either hand which was pitted with holes, and noting the strata of sandstone and the numerous erosions in it which could only be caused by waves, it occurred to me for the first time that a great sea had done this. Before I had proceeded much further I became convinced that I had come

upon one of the best places in the world for the study of geology. I seemed to be looking upon an old sea coast, and yet, compared to most other scenes, so recent as to retain its indentations and wave-washed shores with a startling freshness.

Yet, strange to say, we were 1800 feet above the Caspian Sea.

While yet a distance of forty versts from the Caspian we first beheld its waters, the sterile brown shores, and the town of Bakû which was a mere speck at that distance. The aspect was most desolate, there was not a tree, or a shrub, nor a single plant to attract the eye, but a desert of mighty dunes of yellow earth or sand stood between us and the sea.

We drove at last into Bakû, a town situate on the Caspian and inhabited by a people who are a combination of Calmucks, Persians, Tartars and Jews.

CHAPTER XIV.

A Convict bound to Siberia—The English Club House—The Governor of Bakû—General Stoletoff—His views on India and the English.

BAKÛ, *May 14th*, 1870.

WE drove to a public square where we met an ominous sight, to which I attributed a greater significance than perhaps it deserved. A man clad in a long grey coat and a cap of the same colour and material, with a

placard suspended from his neck and depending over his breast and back, stood upright on a black waggonette listening to a sentence that was being read to him, with all the circumstance of military parade. A company of soldiers with bayonets fixed stood around the prisoner, while an official was solemnly reading something from a paper. I thought the prisoner was a deserter and was going to be shot, or a murderer about to be hung, but my conductor told me he was to be exiled to the mines of Siberia, for highway robbery with attempt to murder. He was taken round the town three times with drums tom-toming before him, and surrounded by guards with loaded arms, who kept vigilant watch.

We halted abreast of the English club house, whose exterior was eminently respectable, and promised restful ease and comfort. A gentleman took me in, introduced me to the finest suite of apartments there was in the building, and gave me to understand that while I stayed at Bakû it would be a pleasure to the club if I condescended to use the apartments.

Baron Nicolay, the Governor-General of the Caucasus, to whom I had been much indebted, had supplied me with letters of introduction to the principal officers on the route to Bakû. One was addressed to the Governor of the town.

Two hours after my arrival I was waited upon by a young aide-de-camp of the Governor, who invited me to the ball which was to be given at the gubernatorial mansion that evening.

Fortunately I had taken a dress suit with me, with vague ideas that it might turn out useful. A servant of the club called a cab, of which there are plenty in Bakû, and we drove to the mansion along a broad boulevard lined with young trees, with the sea on one side of us, and on the other a long line of noble warehouses, shops, and villas. The Governor's residence was one of the finest in Bakû, and faced the sea, and to the left of it was the public garden and promenade. Governor Kalubakini was a hale old man of seventy, tall and martial in appearance, with a pair of peculiarly fiery eyes. He rushed towards me as though he was leading an assault, took hold of me by the shoulders, looked me in the face, and his eyes, his moustaches, his whiskers, and bald head and snowy hair, even his gold buttons and orders expressed an impetuous welcome; then, taking hold of my left arm, he marched me towards his lady, and in a brusque manner introduced me to her.

He was so rapid in speech, and straightforward in action, that in a brief time all the gentlemen present became known to me, as generals, colonels, captains in the army and navy, judges, one prince, and two or three wealthy merchants.

Everybody spoke in French, and everybody had something to ask. Did I like Russia? Did I like Tiflis? and the Caucasus? and the Russian ladies? and what did I think of Russians in general? Had I seen the Crimea? was I pleased with the country? and could I say without prejudice whether France

and England were interfering between Russia and Turkey? Had I been in Abyssinia? Really now! and what did I think of Theodore? and the captives? and who was king at the present time? Was I going to Turkestan? Ah! then I must visit Krasnovodsk, the new Russian settlement. Presently a young officer was sighted moving through the salon, and the Governor in his impetuous way laid hold of his arm and hurried with him to me, and after blurting out that he was General Stoletoff, leader of the Expedition to Central Asia, turned to him and said, "He has actually been in Abyssinia; there, talk away, both of you."

General Stoletoff, whose presence in Central Asia has been watched lately with so much attention by the Indian journals, is a youngish-looking man of about forty, with an eager, sanguine face much bronzed by the Turkestan sun, and a figure that is soldierly and vigorous.

We were soon deep in conversation. He asked me if I ever read Anglo-Indian papers, and said that he was very much amused at remarks which appeared in the *Friend of India*, and a newspaper called the *Pioneer*, and two or three others printed in India.

Such designs as those crazy editors in India attributed to him were quite contrary to the views entertained at St. Petersburg. If they only reflected upon the immense distance to be traversed between the Caspian Sea and the Indian frontier, and regarded

the nature of the country, they would see that it was not easily practicable to convey an army through that immense and droughty region, at least in sufficient force to make an impression upon a country where the English were so much at home with their railways and seaports.

"Now, our object," said he, "and you will believe me if you are unprejudiced, is to open trade with countries where there is no competition. If Russia had merchants so enterprising as the English, it had been done long ago, but unfortunately our Government has to take the initiative in everything and of course its every movement raises suspicions, which I can assure you are perfectly groundless. I will give you an instance of Russian apathy. About five miles from here are naphtha wells which produce oil enough to supply all Russia. Some Russian merchants aware of this important fact lately came down to inspect them, and though satisfied that the oil was a great source of wealth, returned home without the slightest idea of turning it into account. The Government, being more alive to its value, built a small establishment, and started to export the oil that was running to waste. It was only then that some St. Petersburg merchants formed a company and bought it from Government, and they are now making a good thing out of it. It is the same way with the Central Asian trade. Our merchants are too timid, they have no speculative spirit; they wish to get the trade of the country but will not stir in it, unless they have the

Government troops before them to clear the way and protect them.

"Years ago one of our generals explored the eastern shores of this sea (the Caspian) and pronounced Krasnovodsk to be one of the best ports they could obtain near these waters, but the constant raids made by the Tekies in the vicinity prevented them from occupying the settlement, and they accordingly abandoned it as impracticable. Some months ago I was ordered to take command of an expedition of 1500 men, which was to start from a place near Darbent for Krasnovodsk. I landed the infantry and reconnoitred the country in the immediate vicinity of the bay, which is deep and secure. I pushed forwards to the valley of the Kavodagh, where I established the military posts; I found some sweet water and a wood close by on the slopes of the mountains near it. The mercantile settlement was established on the shore of the bay, and called Krasnovodsk after the name given to it by its first explorers.

"The chief disadvantage of the country is the want of water and fuel, though there is sufficient in the immediate vicinity of the mountains, but further along the route to Khiva I have not seen a drop of water or a stick of wood.

"Now, our idea" (I will here repeat his own words as well as my memory will serve) "is to march to a farm half-way between Khiva and the Aral Sea, along the ancient bed of the Oxus, which now runs to the Aral, and cut the dyke which the Turkomans have erected

to prevent the water running to the Caspian. Any number of expeditions will be easy after that, as we shall establish colonies of Russians along the river. The thing can be done, for I know from my own observations, having been to Khiva, that the effect upon that treeless and thirsty steppe will be incalculable, as you may imagine. After this a railway will be made to Khiva, which must surrender, not to military occupation, though I cannot see how else we can ensure the peace to trade and commerce. We will be able to send steamers to the Aral and up the Oxus close to Bokhara. Samarcand is close by and will be re-occupied.

"Within three hundred versts of Samarcand are Tashkend and Khokand, and the trade of those cities must naturally flow to the channel made for it. We have been obliged to give up Samarcand, the expense of occupying it being so great, owing to the inhospitable nature of the intervening country between that city and Russia; but by way of the Caspian and the Amu Darya (the Oxus) it will be easy enough to recapture it and permanently occupy it."

"But," I asked, "have you tried 'Norton's' tube wells?"

"Oh, yes! I tried half-a-dozen of them at Krasnovodsk, but they were of no use—the soil is so arid; and when we did get a few drops the water was brackish and bitter, not fit to drink."

This ended our conversation. The general expressed his delight at meeting me in the most hearty

manner, and said that he hoped we should resume the subject next day, which shall be related in my next letter, together with my visit to the naphtha wells of Bakû, a description of the town itself, the Caspian shores and my trip to Krasnovodsk and the settlement of Ashurad.

CHAPTER XV.

Bakû—The Paris of the Caspian—The Naphtha Fires—A Strange Sight—Departure from Bakû—Along the Russian, the Persian, and Turkestan Coasts, Central Asia—The ancient Oxus.

BAKÛ, *May 15th*, 1870.

BAKÛ is divided into the old and new town. The meanness of the native quarter will be forgotten after viewing the noble frontage of the new or Russian quarter, which is nearest the sea.

New Bakû may well be called the Paris of the Caspian. Astrakhan is larger, and its commerce is more extensive than that of Bakû, but the former cannot boast of the refined society which is found in the latter town. The vast number of improvements that have been made along the shore of the sea, the docks, piers, dry basins and freestone embankment, are due to Governor Kalubakini. The embankment along the sea front of Bakû is barely a mile long, yet it has been so thoroughly well built, and is so well adapted to the commerce of the port,

that even a western city might be proud of it. It has three piers, extending about 300 feet or more into the sea, for the steamers trading in the Caspian to lie alongside.

South of the docks, where lay several vessels, were moored public and private sea bath-houses tastefully made of wood and elegantly painted. Beyond these, and opposite Government House, the public garden and summer club house, the embankment bulged out into the sea in a semicircular form, where the élite of Bakû promenade at evening. Here there is a fountain which is supplied with water from a condensing steamer anchored a few hundred yards out in the harbour.

The embankment, which is faced, with a fine-grained sandstone, continues for a quarter of a mile further where there is a deep bend, and we have a view of a bold projection of the sandstone coast.

A drive of half a mile to the south, takes us to Cape Bayloff, on which are now being built noble and commodious barracks, hospitals for the marines and soldiers, and a church exclusively for the garrison. From this point Bakû and its bay can be seen to advantage.

The town is said to contain 20,000 inhabitants, and from what I have seen I should judge it to have an important future.

Its principal commerce at present is in petroleum, silk, cotton, rice and wine. There are no less than twenty-five petroleum refineries in the town alone.

The largest oil refinery is at Soukhaneh. I was enjoined to see it at night. It is about six miles from Bakû and behind the rising ground which forms the crest of the cape of that name. The night was very dark, and after a drive of four miles, a grand sight presented itself. There were scores of tall shafts of flame springing upward like fountains of light, and far to the left were many scores of fires emitting dense columns of smoke. A slight breeze blew from the north, and before its influence the slender fiery towers rose and fell or shot up arrow-like towards the stars; now and then they wavered and bent their crests towards each other, nodded, and suddenly became united, forming a radiant bow, and again streamed towards us like fiery meteors.

Presently I stood within the refining works of Soukhaneh where it was as light as day. I could have picked up a pin from the ground by the light from the flames. The gaseous exhalations from the earth, which are alight, escape through crevices and small holes with which the rock below must be perforated. Near the gate of the works was a shaft of flame about ten feet high, and an inch in diameter, burning as bright as a gas jet. Here and there, and whenever necessary within the enclosure of the extensive works, flamed more than two score of these tall lustrous jets The porter's house at the gate was lit up by gas let in by a pipe which carried it from a crevice near by. The office of one superintendent, seventy-five yards off, was lit by another; his cook prepared the food for

himself and his family by gas lit in a kind of iron range. The workmen's rooms were all brilliant with light fed by natural conduits in the rock which extended far beneath them. Then the great furnaces which refined the oil were heated by flames fed by half a dozen pipes $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter each, which, as the superintendent turned the brass taps, roared up the great mouths of the furnaces.

"Do these burn always?" I asked of the superintendent.

"Always, and as steady as if they were supplied by artificial gas works," he replied.

"Do you ever burn coal or wood?" I then asked.

"We have no use for any fuel other than this gas. It heats the furnaces, lights the works and our own rooms, and we cook our food by it. The gas escaping from beneath us, is not only sufficient for every necessary use, but would suffice for dozens of works as extensive as ours, and to light the streets of half a dozen Bakûs!"

"But where does this gas come from?" I asked.

"Really I do not know, unless it comes from volcanic sources. The whole country underneath is full of naphtha and bitumen. Our crude petroleum comes from a place about four miles off, and we distil it here. We use 3500 pouds of crude petroleum per week, which we get from Balakhana. (A poud is 36 lbs. avoirdupois, which will make 126,000 lbs. or about 630 barrels of 50 gallons each.) A couple of

steamers are loaded each week for Astrakhan, Moscow, and St. Petersburg, and we sell a good deal in the town at a rouble and a quarter a gallon, or 98 cents silver. The black petroleum springs of Balakhana produce altogether 6000 pouds or 1080 barrels a day. The other distillery at Soukhaneh and those at Bakû use the rest."

In an old building attached to the distillery works is the remains of a fire worshippers' temple. There is only one man of that strange sect left now and he is regarded by the Christians as an anomaly, while to the Mussulmans he is an object of detestation. He bears himself humbly towards all visitors, but despite the menaces of the Mussulmans, who often remind him of the fate of his former fellow believers, he still maintains the sacred fire. Like all other fires on the Cape of Astrakhan the sacred flame is fed by an emission of gas from the earth, so it costs him nothing, and he believes it is sustained by God. Sir Robert Ker Porter has called the ruin "sublime," but it seems to me to be a strange misuse of the term. All that I could admire was the cleanliness of the old temple relic. Seeing a stranger in my person, the old man commenced a monotonous chant, ringing a handbell rapidly which lasted about ten minutes. He then took out his girdle of cloth, opened and kissed a particular corner of it, repeating some form of words, and looking piously solemn.

He then kissed the altar, the few shells that adorned it, the raised platform on which he had

sat, the girdle of cloth, and his church services were over.

The day before I left Bakû, Governor Kalubakini drove up to the club house where I was staying, and after ascertaining my opinions about Bakû, he asked me if I had seen everything. I answered that I thought I had.

"But are you sure?" he again asked.

"Almost!" I said.

"Well, let us see; you have seen Soukhaneh?"

"Yes."

"And Cape Bayloff?"

"Yes."

"And of course the barracks, and hospitals, and docks, and fountains, gardens, condensers, the club house, our finest bells, and our heroes?"

"All."

"Eh-bien—Have you seen our dry-dock?"

"Oh! yes, indeed."

"Have you seen our new monument?"

"No."

"Nor our prison?"

"No."

"Nor our arsenal?"

"No, but I was about to see that to-day."

"Have you been to the Maiden's Tower?"

"No, for I did not suppose there was anything to see inside."

"No, that is true, but still, being in Bakû, you should see it. But come along with me. If you are

not engaged, I will be your chaperon, for it is not every day we see a journalist here."

We first drove to the new monument, which is being erected to Prince Tarmollof who took Bakû from the Persians, and my venerable friend went through a most enthusiastic pantomime to illustrate how Tarmollof had chopped heads, and then a base assassin had come behind him and stabbed him!—Oh! the villain—and the General in his fury made a terrific demonstration with his huge cane.

The monument will he a handsome one, and will be a credit to Bakû when finished, as it is intended to be an object of utility as well as ornament to the town. The pedestal is to be placed over a huge tank which is to be supplied with a constant supply of fresh water, for the use of the poor of the town.

From the new monument we proceeded to the prison, which is an unpretentious, long and low building surrounded by a high wall. I expect the General took me here to exhibit the excellent way in which he managed this den of Tartar, Hunnic, and Persian ruffians.

"Has anybody any complaint to make?" he asked of a lot of prisoners who crowded to a grated window to the exclusion of the air to those within.

"Dear Lord Governor!" said a tall brawny fellow springing up to the full height of the grating, "I have. I ask for justice. I ask for freedom. As Allah is my witness men have lied against me. What have I done? I met a traveller on the road; I begged of

him to be merciful, and give me a few copecks. The traveller ran away from me fearing that I was about to do something to him, and I went on my way wondering. After I had gone a few versts some soldiers came along and arrested me. I am here, is that justice?"

"Were you tried?" asked the Governor.

"Yes; some men talked a long time about me, and then a man said to me I must go to prison."

"That is enough!" said the Governor sternly.

"Has any one else anything to say?"

Yes, there were three or four who had different stories to relate, but the Governor after listening to them, said he had heard nothing to induce him to interfere in any way.

We then drove to inspect the arsenal, to which the palace of the Khans of former times has been converted.

It is a curious building, and strongly fortified. Like several other Moslem palaces in Trans-Caucasia, it is battlemented on the top, and has a justice room, in the centre of which is a trap door through which the prisoners put out their heads to hear sentence passed, which was no sooner done than they were whipped off by the executioner. The great gate is full of minute and elaborate chiselling. The grand saloon contains field artillery, and in the harem chambers are stored the ammunition. In an antechamber we saw an enormous ambulance capable of carrying six wounded men off a field at one time, or

two dozen passengers if used as an omnibus. The Governor informed me with a chuckle that after he had shown Mr. Charles Allison, the British Minister to the Teheran Court, all that was in the Khan's palace, Mr. Allison turned to him and said that he would like to buy the ambulance, as it was the only curious and valuable thing he had seen in it.

The "Maiden's Tower" is like a semicircular watch-tower, and is about 80 feet high. It was built by a Tartar Khan about two centuries ago close to the sea, at the request of his daughter. The story is that he had a most lovely daughter, for whom he had an unholy passion. The princess, wearied with his importunities, promised to submit to him upon the condition that he should build for her a tower 80 feet high close to the sea. The father gladly acceded to her wish, and in a short time the tower was complete and furnished in a manner becoming to a princess. On a night that was arranged, the daughter betook herself to the roof of the tower, where she awaited her father.

When the Khan reached the roof, and had sat down in a chair provided for him, he reminded his daughter of her promise. "Yes, father," she answered; "thou hast indeed complied with the condition I imposed, and I hasten to comply with my promise to thee," saying which, she sprang over the battlement into the sea, and was drowned. The base of the tower is now fully 100 feet from the sea.

The next evening I took passage for Krasnovodsk

by steamer which was to touch at Lenkoran, Astara, Enzelli, and Ashurad, at which place another steamer lay ready to take the passengers for Krasnovodsk. The old Governor was extremely affectionate, and kissed and hugged me most paternally at parting.

The length of the Caspian Sea is about 680 English miles, and its greatest breadth about 290 miles. Its greatest depth is a little over 3000 feet. Its surface is said to be 98 feet below the Black Sea, and 240 feet lower than the Aral.

Along the coast, except near Darbent and Bakû, it is very shallow, especially along the northern and Persian coasts, owing to the alluvial deposits of the numerous rivers flowing into it from Russia and Persia.

This sea has been regarded as peculiar in many ways by ancient and modern writers. Pliny believed its waters to be fresher than any saline sea, and the same thing was stated by Quintus Curtius Rufus in his "City of Alexander the Great."

There are Persians who swear that serpents of great length are sometimes seen in it, but Persians we all know are not always veracious. The largest species of the serpent tribe I ever saw were two or three large water snakes, seen in the fresh-water lake or Bay of Murdanti on the south-western coast. European travellers who have taken great pains to be correct, distinctly deny that serpents have ever been seen in the Caspian.

In order to form an idea of the salineness of the Caspian, I drank some of the water, then opened

a flask of Dead Sea water I had with me, and tasted that, but I must confess that I did not observe any very great difference between the two waters. I thought one was as salty as the other.

There are two companies owning steamers on the Caspian. One has thirteen steamers of between 300 and 500 tons, the other possesses six. The Russian Government own eight naval vessels carrying from two to eight guns of no great calibre. Besides the steamers there are probably two hundred sailing vessels of various tonnage engaged in commerce.

The Russians are the sole masters of this sea, according to treaty. When this treaty was about to be signed, Fath Ali Shah, who reigned in Persia, asked why the Russians laid such stress upon the sole occupation of the Caspian. "Is it salt or fresh water?" he asked of his ministers. "Salt water," they replied. "What do they want of salt water? let them have it in the name of Allah!" and all rights over it were therefore ceded to the Russians. Had it been fresh the case would probably have been different, as he might have had some reason for thinking that its waters might be useful in some way to his own thirsty land.

Lenkoran is 113 miles by sea from Bakû, and was reached in fourteen hours. It is a rising town, partial to shade, and constructed after the Russian method with broad streets paved with tiles. Beyond the leaf-embowered town is a background of green

hills. The population is about 5000. We anchored close to the island of Sara to obtain wood.

Thirty miles south of Lenkoran by sea is Astara, situate at the frontier line between Russia and Persia, at the mouth of a small stream of that name. Astara is a cluster of villages, and its trade is derived from being the port of Ardubeel, which is a large Persian town in the province of Ardebashan, and about fifty miles from the coast.

Ardubeel has a population of 20,000. Tradition says that where it now stands was a lake, but a king ordered two of his officers named Ard and Beel to drain the lake into the Caspian, which they did by cutting through the mountains, and the town which was built on the plain thus created was called after them Ardubeel. The Russians exchange with Ardubeel and Astara, brass, steel, brown and white pepper, and delftware, for gallnuts, dried fruits, cotton, raw silk, and Hamadan wine.

Beyond Astara the country rises from the sea in a series of scarps richly covered with vegetation, and the same vivid greenness is visible as we continue the voyage to Enzelli. At the south-western extremity of the Caspian, we reach the port of Resht, called Enzelli.

It is built upon a narrow point of land, which divides Murdab Bay or Lake of Enzelli from the sea. A narrow opening in the low land permits vessels of light draught to enter the lake to discharge freight alongside of the wharf. But passenger steamers

are obliged to anchor about a mile from the shore. Travellers for Resht, Teheran, Isfahan, Shiraz and India, debark at Enzelli, then proceed in a boat across the lake to Pirbazaar, where horses may be found to take them to Resht.

Our next port was Ashurad, at the south-eastern extremity of the Caspian, and as we proceeded eastward, we had the coast of Mazanderan, the finest province of Persia, within view.

According to Firdusi the Homer of Persia—

> "Mazanderan is the bower of spring,
> My native home; the balmy air
> Diffuses health and fragrance there;
> So tempered is the genial glow,
> Nor heat, nor cold, we never know.
> Tulips and Hyacinths abound
> On every lawn, and all around
> Blooms like a Garden in its prime,
> Fostered by that delicate clime."

He also says: "Mazanderan is truly a blessed region, the very garden of beauty, where the cheeks of the women are tinted with the hue of the pomegranate flowers." This is rather extravagant we must admit, but after the grateful contrast of Mazanderan with Bakû, the poet's embellishments will be forgiven.

Ashurad is an island situate halfway between the mainland of Persia and that of Turkestan, at the entrance of a bay. It commands a view of both countries. The Persians claim to one degree north of the Gomgan road, but the river which enters the

bay is considered as the actual boundary between Turkestan and Persia. North of it the Turkomans are in actual possession, and commit depredations frequently as far west as Nenhad-i-Sir in Persia.

This part of the Caspian was once infested by pirates, but they have been extirpated by the Russians. There is a story told, that the first time the pirates attempted to renew the game of war at sea, after the occupation of Ashurad by the Russians, that, terrified by the volumes of black smoke and the revolving paddle wheels which churned the sea into foam, the Turkomans threw themselves into the sea, from a belief that the demon of Mazanderan had been resurrected into life by Allah for their destruction. Six months later they tried again, but perceiving it impossible to evade the watchful steamer, they despaired of ever attacking the Persians by sea, and to kidnap slaves as formerly.

The Russians, though delayed by the fevers of the malarious coast and the hostilities of the Persians, have established quite a trade on the island, and Ashurad may now be considered as the port of Astrabad, which is a large city in the interior with a population of about 40,000. The Astrabad people import from Russia, hardware, loaf sugar, china, crockery, cloth, iron and steel, tin, calico, fans, and other articles with which large caravans are loaded for Meshed and Herat.

The island is but three miles in circumference, and is protected by a war steamer and a fort which

mounts twelve guns. A garrison of 200 soldiers is always kept here. The barracks and officers' quarters are models of good taste, and each officer possesses a plot of ground to cultivate and adorn in the manner most agreeable to himself.

Formerly the island was a mere patch of sand, but it is now a blooming place. Large tanks have been made to preserve the rain water, and the commander's house has quite a grove of young trees about it. There is a library of perhaps 800 volumes for the use of the garrison, and altogether there is much contentment felt, though some twenty years ago it was doubted whether the Russians would be able to occupy the island for long.

Two days after my arrival at Ashurad, the government steamer left for Krasnavodsk, and the commanding officer very kindly gave me passage in her. This settlement is 240 miles north of the island of Ashurad, and is situated at the extreme end of a lengthy bay on the south eastern coast.

It was first settled in the reign of Peter the Great, subsequently deserted, and then retaken and occupied by Captain Mouravieff and his expedition.

Trade increases but slowly. When General Stoletoff came here last November, the Tekie Turkomans of the interior commenced a system of murder and kidnapping. The habit was in strict accordance with the Ishmaelitish practice which obtained in the vicinity of Astrabad and the Persian coast villages, but the Russians proved to be different people from

the Persians. It was Scythian against Scythian in this case, and Stoletoff had graduated with honours at the military school, and commanded a regiment of civilised Scythian soldiers armed with modern breech-loaders.

For every soldier kidnapped or murdered, the nearest tribe was forced to pay heavy penalties. It was useless to ask to which of the 200 tribes of the Turkomans the miscreants belonged, for every man able to bear arms was a marauder. Stoletoff was indefatigable to explore the country, to surprise the enemy, and to punish with death those who had not yet comprehended the definition of the word "Quarter." Prisoners were made only by sheer force of muscular strength or by stratagem ; such as were caught, were brought to the fort and kept on short commons, though this was nothing to them, for they were used to it. They were frequently compelled to witness the manœuvres of regular troops, they were shown the artillery, the men-of-war belched their broadsides, and with their mitrailleuse raised clouds of sand. Stoletoff in fluent Tartar also attempted to teach them the Russian ideas of *meum* and *tuum*, and to explain to them that what was their property could not be taken from them, that it was theirs to do what they liked with, to exchange for fair money or other equivalent, or keep as they had a mind, "so what is ours is ours, to do what we like with, to keep, or sell for money, or exchange with you, or any other tribe, for what we want."

He further told them that the Russians had come to trade with them, and showed them what he had, silks and gay prints of all colours, woollen shawls, caps of astrakhan, knives and other cutlery, iron ploughs, white flour, tea, sugar, crockery, beads and glassware, all of which he said were to be exchanged for sheep, goats, horses, cows, wool, hides and skins, oil of sesame and its seeds, or anything else they desired to part with. "Is it not better that we should do trade, rather than fight?" he asked. "Go then and tell your friends that they shall be welcome to come and depart in peace."

After a while he released all his prisoners, and they went home to convey the news of what they had seen and heard. The result is that the disposition to cultivate trade relations is now beginning to manifest itself.

A dozen or so of sailing vessels are at present employed between this port and Astrakhan, but in a month or so a steamer will call at the port, the first of future semi-weekly visits. Two caravans from Khiva arrived last January bringing fruit, vegetables and rice, and they are expected to return shortly with some more produce.

One caravan, composed of 6560 camels, arrived only a few weeks ago at Krasnovodsk, from the provinces beyond the Balkan.

The country which shuts in St. Michael's Bay is an intricate jumble of ravines and spongy rock, of dry water-courses and miniature plateaus, of gleaming

grey waves of sand, and steep hills arranging themselves as they sweep round the eastern end of the bay into the bulk of the Balkan Mountains, the Great and Little Balkan. Beyond this rugged rampart of broken grey rocks, every part of which exhibits traces of the action of water, extends the steppe, a vast undulating ocean, over which move the shifting cloud shadows. It is an area wherein nature appears to be exhausted.

The mirage at noon plays over it. Far off you fancy you discern a sea or a lake; near its shores tall forests seem to bend and wave; here a temple rears itself, there a city of domes and spiring minarets.

As you approach the foot of the Balkan Hills, you observe a geologic change manifest on the surface of the land.

The worn-out and torn steppe slopes gradually to a wide water-course, choked with long lines of sand, and little hills of piled-up boulder. It is the dry bed of the Amu Darya, or the ancient Oxus. Before the head of the river meets Michael's Bay you will see that it takes a wide curve, approaching close to the base of the Balkan, and then, after a grand sweep, emerges in a straight line towards the sea. There the Russians have built a little fort near a tiny stream which rises from a gaping cleft in its slopes, not too far from the bay's head, handy for retreat and serving as an extreme outpost. From this encampment the greater and the more distant lesser Balkan stand forth prominent. Stunted undergrowth softly shades the slopes, and afford fuel for the colonists. Were it

not for the wild game that is abundant, life at this isolated position would be dull indeed, but, happily, wolves, jackals, hyenas, and panthers are frequently met with besides antelopes and deer.

The outpost at the head of the bay may be said to be the first of a chain of forts and settlements which is about to be established between Michael's Bay (along the empty channel of the Amu Darya) and the Aral Sea. It is said that when these forts are completed, and the occupation of the country permanently secured, the dyke between Kohne Urgendsh and Chodsheilli will be cut, and the Oxus will be made to flow through its ancient channel into the Caspian. From the head of Michael's Bay to Chodsheilli the dry bed of the Oxus runs in a north-east direction for 370 miles. Chodsheilli is a large town on the branch of the Oxus which empties into the Aral Sea, situated 120 miles by water from the mouth and 125 miles by the caravan road, north of Khiva. The most fertile portion of the Khanate of Khiva is on the western or Caspian side of the Oxus, the principal town, Khiva, is 40 miles west of the Oxus, but fed by many canals, the principal of which is the Pahlawan Canal.

The river flows through the Khanate at the rate of three and a quarter miles per hour, until it gets below Chodsheilli, where the delta begins, and the sands and various channels considerably weaken the force with which it runs past Chodsheilli. Hence, where the principal debouchure enters Taldyk Bay, in the Aral, it has lost all the characters of a great river, being

neither deep nor wide, nor capable of navigation, except by very small steamers.

An Oriental writer of the fifteenth century says, that in the year 1034 of the Hejira, which corresponds with 1575 A.D., the river just above Kunja or Kohne Urgendsh, a town 40 miles west of Chodsheilli, was turned off, and that the lands in the immediate vicinity became barren in consequence, and that as compensation for their loss the chief of the Tekies ordered his tribe to cultivate the land lying between Urjendsh and Chodsheilli.

Before this period all the lands along the banks of the river to the Caspian could show fields, gardens, and vineyards. In autumn the people moved from the river banks to the wells, two days distant, to avoid the mosquitoes, and in winter returned to their own lands ; the country was well populated, and a people whose occupation consisted in breeding camels dwelt in that country around the mouth of the Oxus. Captain Wooderoff, travelling in Turkestan in 1748 was told by the natives that the Amu Darya had ceased to flow to the Caspian Sea something like one hundred years before.

Sir Anthony Jenkinson, travelling through the country in 1559, gives a different story, and says all the water necessary for the irrigation of the fields is derived from the river, which on that account does not reach the sea.

As the river during the summer heats used to dry up in several places, the Turkomans supposed that by

constructing a dam at the mouth of the river they would prevent it becoming shallow in its upper course; but it turned out otherwise.

From the above we may suppose that the first dam was constructed shortly before Sir Anthony visited the country, and that the second was constructed in the year 1575, as the Oriental writer states. It is clear, also, that the dam constructed east of Kohne Urjendsh across the embouchure of the Caspian branch compelled the waters to seek another channel.

Hence, we may conclude that as the Caspian Sea was the receptacle of the Oxus in ancient times, even as late as the fifteenth century, the Amu Darya or the Oxus, as soon as the dyke is cut, can be made to run through its old channel.

General Stoletoff is sanguine that he is the De Lesseps destined to perform the great undertaking, and restore life to the now thirsty and arid steppes of Turkestan, to that land which beheld the glories of Seljuk, of Alp Arslan, and the shepherd king, Malek Shah.

Those who have studied the growth of commerce in Asia, and the various routes frequented, will not forget that the commerce between China, India, and Europe was carried on in ancient times along this very route on which Stoletoff's attention is now fixed.

We have had one example lately of an ancient highway of nations re-opened to the world in the Isthmus of Suez, and there is every reason to believe that the waters of the Oxus may also be made sub-

servient to the uses of man in other ways than irrigation.

When the Bactrians occupied that province called Turkestan to-day, the silks of China and the spices and pearls of Hindustan were conveyed to the sources of the Oxus, floated down to the Caspian Sea, transported across that sea to the mouth of the Cyrus (Kûr), then up that river to its source, and after five days' march were conveyed to the Phasis, by which they were floated down to the Euxine.

The rafts and barges used to convey these precious goods are to be replaced by a railway from the mouth of the Phasis to Bakû, from whence a line of steamers afterwards will convey goods to Krasnavodsk, and thence by caravans overland to Samarkand and Bokhara.

England regards with strong distrust every movement of Russia toward Central Asia, but to my narrow understanding every conquest in Central Asia by Russia is a blessing to her and to all other civilised countries.

A Russian diplomat said to me: "Why does not England, instead of whining at us, compete for the trade. We will not stop her, nor try to balk her, save by open honest competition in peaceful markets. Let her send her soldiers to protect a road as far north as Bokhara for her merchants and traders. It would be the best thing for us, and indeed, would cement us as firm allies. We do not want India, we only want the trade of that land, where there are no rivals.

"Instead of standing sentry on the Afghan frontier to prevent merchants from going out of India, she ought to invite them by sending soldiers ahead, or be silent, while we come towards India."

THROUGH PERSIA.

CHAPTER XVI.

Resht—At the Russian Consulate—Chapparing towards Teheran—Through the Jungle of Ghilan—Reach the Persian Table-land.

TEHERAN, *June 10th*, 1870.

MY last letter found me in Turkestan; I am now in Persia.

At the landing-place of Pir-bazaar we found horses in waiting for us, on which, after a ride of five miles, we reached Resht. The land is strange, and quite contrary to my ideas of sunny Persia. Here are marshes, a dripping forest, a quagmiry road, deep puddles, black, heavy clouds, which do not belong to the Persia of my fancy. But the people, with their great round eyes, full of unspoken poetry and romance, approach nearer to what I expected. A ride of four miles brought us out of the forest. Then little clearings began to be seen, with rice and onion plots, and gardens stocked with various kinds of vegetables. Then rose to our view the houses of the proprietors,

such houses as pioneers build, mere log cabins. As we drew nearer to Resht we saw groves of figs, oranges, peaches, and nectarines.

Two Persians rode in front of me bearing the badges of the Russian Consulate. They were conceited fellows, and wished the party to enter the town in style. One galloped ahead through the streets to inform the Consul, the one who remained with me rode in front of my caravan with steady pace.

The greatest street in Resht is a narrow lane overhung with vines and creepers and golden fruit, and now and then disclosing a short length of alcoves and recesses stocked with rich and gauzy material. The owners of these are squatted on their haunches, and one cries out, "See there—a Faringhi! Wallah!"

The rider ahead takes our matters into his own hands. He brushes from the path the throngs of the curious, his whip seems raised to strike, scorn of them all is written in each line of his face. He is proud of his position under the Consul. Then ware, dogs!

We proceeded in this style through various streets, and finally stopped before the door of the Russian Consulate. We were greeted by a host of servants. The Consul came down from his office, which was above, surrounded by other servants. The Consul was a Russian, but he had been so long out of his country that he had almost forgotten how to be courteous. I am sure that the hearty old Governor of Bakû would have disowned him.

Resht is nearly four hundred years old. Ancient Cyropolis, an opulent city known to the merchants of the olden days, may have occupied the site long before Resht came into existence. Like most Persian towns and cities, the modern town appears to have undergone the usual course of vicissitudes common to them. It has been a ruin more than once. It has flourished and waned alternately. In 1822 it contained a population of about seventy thousand Persians and Armenians, it may have twenty thousand to-day. Its principal trade is in silk.

Two or three European firms are represented by their agents. M. Vlasto, acting for the great firm of Ralli & Co., said that the revenue derived from the silk trade of the province of Ghilan, of which Resht is the capital, was 135,004 tomans,* equal to $270,000 in gold. The annual value of the silk produced in Ghilan is 1,800,000 tomans, or $3,600,000. It is said to be the richest province in Persia, and that it might be made trebly productive; but, alas! it is the way of a Persian to say: "My father and grandfather did it before me; why should I not do it also?"

The far past is faintly shadowed in the costumes and manners of its inhabitants. Their caps may be seen outlined on the sculptures of Thebes. Their robes are a combination of the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Jewish dress.

Their women and children are clothed with the same kind of raiment as that which clothed the

* A toman is equal to $2 or 8 shillings at the present time.

daughters of Israel. The coat of many colours was given to Joseph—"With such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled." The play of colours, of pure white silk over blue or scarlet, the mixture of scarlet and purple, that we meet in a Persian street, reminds us of the unchangeable character of Eastern peoples.

I acquainted the Consul with my intention to go to the bazaars. "Then I will tell my servants," said he, "because it won't do for you to be seen alone in the streets."

"Why, in the name of common sense; am I a little boy who might be lost?"

"No," laughed the Consul—"to my thinking you are not a boy who is likely to get lost, but you are a Feringhee, with the clothes of a gentleman, and you must have the bodyguard of a gentleman when you walk, otherwise, you will get no respect from a Persian. Then you are my guest, and you must have some consideration for me, for remember my position may be compromised. Hitherto, you have been among the Sunis; the Sheeahs are different, they are clannish and extremely fanatic."

"Oh!" I answered, "if that is the case, I suppose I must bear the greatness thrust on me?"

So, surrounded by ten guards of honour, I sallied out on an idle tour through the streets.

Abu Hassan was not more perplexed when he awoke from the effects of the opiate which the Caliph of Haroun of Bagdad had administered to him, and

found himself addressed as Commander of the Faithful, than I was.

The bazaars of Resht are famous throughout the East for the production of fancy tablecloths, chair and dish covers. A good-sized tablecloth costs about $60 in gold.

For the making of these elaborately worked cloths, various patterns are cut into small oval pieces, round, square, and triangular, which are distributed to boy-tailors to be sewn, blue to alternate with red, green with purple, white with yellow, and so on. Several pieces are laid before each boy as his task, and the master tailor directs the work. When all has been sewn into a gay and gaudy tablecloth, it is spread over the laps of six boys, and a supply of vari-coloured silk thread is distributed to them for the floral designs which generally consist of winding vine branches, rose blossoms, flowering plants in which nestle little birds, buds, leaves of the fig-tree, various fruits, Koran precepts, and many other devices, which are to be worked into them.

A work of this elaborate kind requires five days for as many boys, and when you come to reckon up the boys' wages, the cost of the silk thread, and superfine cloth of all colours, and the moderate profit which the master expects from the cloth, the silk, and five days' steady work, the price is not much to pay.

An artist would find a good subject for his brush in a table-cloth maker's recess.

Over every house door, carved on the keystone of

the arch, or chiselled on the stone lintel, is the Mussulman's charm against evil—the solemn adjuration "In the name of God, the Most Merciful and Gracious." "Are you evil-minded—then in the name of God, stay away, and cross not the threshold; are you righteous, and do you come in peace? then welcome in the name of God."

When the visitor knocks at the door, the host advances to the door of his chamber, and says "Bismillah," in the name of God. Before sitting down to his meals, he delivers the "Bismillah." On his fowling-piece and on the blade of his dangerous-looking knife and scimitar are incised ths first verse of the Koran. "In the name of God, the Most Merciful and Gracious." The divine name is on the Sheeah's lips oftener than any other word.

Resht itself is one great curiosity. It is an epitome of many ages, and of many Oriental styles. The poor mud walls enclose a delightful sanctuary, a garden of roses and a miniature heaven. Push open the creaking door, and behold the house is a bower of vines and roses!

Resht is in a forest. A few years ago the Russians attempted to enter Persia by a path which they cut through it, but lost their way, and were obliged to retreat. Since then, another forest has sprung up as dense and impenetrable as ever. Resht is not to be seen until you have arrived in its streets.

When we departed out of Resht we entered a jungle. In the perspective I saw ague and rheuma-

tism. My guide led the way. The street became a lane, the lane became a trench filled with mire and water. The bramble scratched our faces, the rose-bush, damp and cold, embraced our necks. Then we came to a creek.

"Is this the road?"

"Yes," said the missionary who was with me. "This is Ghilan, and Ghilan is northern Persia." The people have trodden the road for scores of generations until it has become a wide trench several feet lower than the ground of the forest, so in wet weather—and it is always raining—the trench becomes a drain for the forest, and the bed of a stream.

The creek became deeper and deeper, then we followed the path which ran along its edge. We bent our backs level with our horses' necks to avoid the overhanging bushes, while the animals slid over the clayey soil. Above our heads rose the dark canopy of forest, from which the raindrops showered down incessantly. We staggered through masses of fern, and were buried by a grove of young alders, and a moment later we were extricating ourselves from entangling knots of rank grass, our horses sinking to their fetlocks into cushions of moss.

The forest grew thicker, cataracts poured from each leaf, the undergrowth rose over us like the waves of a flood tide, the branches of the trees met overhead and formed a roof above us, but the roof over-burdened with water dropped sheets of water upon us. Then we made up our minds to return. The

crushed plants indicated the way we came, and in an hour we were back in Resht, safe from a flood of young alders, mulberries, chenars, ash, which seemed to grow by inches, so intense was the vigour of vegetable life.

The next morning I began my journey for the Persian capital. There are two ways of public travelling in this land, one is by chappar—or post—the other is by chervahdar or caravan.

The distance to Teheran from Resht is 52 farsakhs, or 206 miles. For each horse hired as far as Teheran we pay eight dollars. But there are several extra disbursements to be made which amount to a considerable sum.

I asked the Russian Consul as to the amount of bakshish I should have to pay my guide on my arrival at Teheran. The Consul said he always paid 3 tomans or $6. Near Teheran I asked a Persian who could talk French what would be the proper amount to pay the guide.

"Oh!" he answered carelessly, "8 tomans;" 16 dollars.

The Persian was my guide's countryman, and all Persians conspire against the foreigner. I paid the guide at Teheran $13, and was thanked.

I also asked the Consul what I should pay the chappar—the man sent from each station to bring back the horses.

Two krans he thought would suffice. Ten stations to Teheran, with ten reliefs of chappars, at 2 krans

each, would amount to $5; horses, $32; guide, $6; chappars, $5 = $43.

These little money matters over, and having donned our macintoshes, fastened spurs to our boots, with whip in hand, we were ready for the ride to Teheran.

We mount and fix ourselves in our saddles, and exchange our "Adieus."

"Burroo, chappar" (on guide), clatter, clatter, clatter and clatter go the horses' feet over the paved streets of Resht, chappar and baggage, interpreter and self bob up and down as the horses rise to action, and strain for the race.

We flew past bazaars and houses, gardens and mosques, scattering groups of men right and left. The sharp yelping yell of the chappar urges the horses to a furious gallop. We head due south. The horses, broad-chested, clean-limbed creatures, were fresh, and well adapted for their gallop of over 20 miles. The swamp jungle and forest is on either side of us, but the road is the king's highway, and semi-macadamized. It runs in a straight line in front and behind us. The vista is arched over by boughs which meet like the arches of a tunnel. A poisonous haze is our element; we are encompassed by clouds of miasma. Such life as we see is of the rankest. A shudder darts through me when I catch a view of the intricacies of water settled in the gloom. The harsh cries of the frogs are continuing and overwhelming, and the myriads of swamp-flies follow us in clouds.

We begin to meet caravans, and hear the sonorous bell which is attached to a leading camel, and the thin tinkle of the tiny donkey bell, sounding not inharmoniously through the mist and twilight. This is another item of Oriental life. I have just time to admire the Persian mule for its fine action, and intelligent look, as we pass the caravan like a flash. Within 2½ hours we had ridden 21 miles, and had reached the station of Khûdûm.

Before proceeding farther, I may as well set down in tabular form the relative distances between each station.

Resht to Khûdûm	6 farsakhs*
Khûdûm to Rustamabad . . .	5 „
Rustamabad to Mendjil	6 „
Mendjil to Khorsan	7 „
Khorsan to Kasvin	7 „
Kasvin to Abdul-abad	4 „
Abdul-abad to Seffer-Khodjeh . . .	5 „
Seffer-Khodjeh to Sungurabad . .	4½ „
Sungurabad to Miandjub . . .	3½ „
Miandjub to Teheran	4 „
	farsakhs 52 = 206½ miles.

Each chappar khaneh, or station, is a square structure, with crenellated mud walls, enclosing an area of about forty paces square. The sole entrance is under a donjon-like tower, in which is the travellers' room. On each side of the lofty entrance are the rooms of the chapparchi or station master, who receives from Government 120 tomans a year. The stables

* A farsakh is supposed to be 3½ miles.

are ranged round the walls, each stable having inner and outer mangers—mere oval troughs of dried mud.

On an average the chappar khanehs can accommodate four travellers, and fifty horses, except at the chappar khanehs of large towns, such as Resht, Kasvin or Teheran. The horses are miserably ill-looking and poor, generally because of their hard work. Six farsakhs is a long distance to gallop, but a Persian chappar horse is equal to it, and would thrive on the work; but when it is compelled to gallop twenty-four, even thirty-two miles almost every day, it is a cruel task.

Chapparing is only another name for posting. In Russia it is admirably managed, the intervening distances between the stations being sometimes less than ten miles, but seldom over sixteen miles; the post-houses look more like tiny farmhouses, and good accommodations are provided for the travellers. In Persia the management of a chappar khaneh is bad throughout. In the first place the building is of mud swarming with scorpions and deadly tarantulas, and vicious insects of various species. It is also ill provided with food, thin cakes of unleavened bread being the staple article, supposed to be fit for gods and dogs alike. Fowls may sometimes be obtained, as well as eggs, butter (rather grease) and butter milk, and now and then mutton.

At Khûdûm we changed good horses for worse, so bad in fact that they might serve as specimens of Corwin's "sickle hammed horses," but nevertheless

a trace of their ancient stock burned in their eyes. We rode out of the station and were on the road again, with about 17 miles before us.

For ten miles beyond Khûdûm we galloped through the same jungle and forest. Then began a gradual change. The jungle had been passed, we began to see clearer, and instead of the clouds which had drenched us with their showers we saw an arch of blue sky.

We galloped over higher ground, not yet fatigued with the unusual exercise, now under a bower of leaves, then through a sloping avenue of grand woods, soon by a mossy hillock and its bubbling spring, then over a pellucid stream.

We plunged under leafy tunnels where the willow met the wild fig, where tall alders mingled with the ash, where the white mulberry embraced the oak, where the wild cherry saluted the jujube and mimosa, and rose out of the spectral light into a beautiful glade on the right of which rose a lofty curtain of rock, with a comb of shadowy trees.

We then ascended a road which in some places was as steep as a precipice, and surmounting the hill had a long view of the Zefidrud, and its turbid waters. This river rises near Mount Demavend, and as it gathers the waters from around the base of the gigantic snowy cone soon becomes a bellowing rapid, and its whole face is chequered with little islets and sheets of foam.

The road curves round the mountain at a sufficient

height above the river to permit us to feast our eyes on its foaming course. The mountain face is long and high and covered closely with pine, fir, mimosa, and tall ash. In their shadows there is a riot of floral life. The green of the herbage is almost hidden by flowers such as those of violets, cowslips, hyacinth, eglantine, jessamine, daisies, primroses, and azaleas.

As he climbs up the thread of a road between Khûdûm and Rustamabad the traveller views scenes of beauty that will long be remembered, scenes such as readers of Lalah Rookh might fairly have expected to meet in Persia.

At Rustamabad we had a cup of tea, for the Samovar is always ready at every chappar khaneh in northern Persia.

"Tchay," the traveller shouts. "Belli, Belli, Sahib," the chapparchi responds. We are not offended, or start when we see him wipe the tiny cup and saucer with his broad thumb, and blow on them with his mouth to remove the floating particles. The act is so Persian.

Long before reaching Mendjil, we had exchanged the swift river and towering mountains, forests and floral beauty, cascades and springs, for a parched country which could boast of but a few scraps of green grass and a ragged fringe or two of shrubbery. The transition from the continual rain, and muggy days, and immense forest to light and spring weather, and naked hills was remarkably sudden. Turning round in the saddle towards the scenes just travelled

over, the forest was seen to have been arrested as at a line which extends through Ghilan and Mazanderan to the longitude of Asterabad.

The reason for it is this. Ghilan and Mazanderan lying to the south draw their excess of rain from the Caspian Sea. The two provinces consist of the Taurus range which has an average slope facing northerly of thirty miles from the sea beach to the Taurian summit.

The heat which prevails on the eastern, western, and northern shores of the Caspian, and over the entire surface causes great evaporation, and the northern winds which blow hard three days out of the week carry this against the long northern slope of the Taurus, when it meets a much colder temperature and is condensed into heavy rains, and when the north winds blow light, as they generally do in summer-time four days out of the week, the vapour is distilled in heavy dews. Mendjil station is at a height of 6500 feet above the sea.

Between Mendjil and Khorsan we have additional proof of this. The latter place is 1000 feet higher, and the grass is still scantier.

From Khorsan, which is eighty-four miles from Resht, we could see the edge of the plateau of Persia. It was 5 P.M. when we left, and we had yet to ride to Kasvin before our day's task would be considered ended.

The Persian sun of my imagination was at last out in all its glory, inclining rapidly towards the west,

much too fierce in its brightness for comfort. At Resht in the morning my Fahrenheit thermometer, which I carried in one of my holsters, showed 62°. At Mendjil, 2.30 P.M., it had risen to 85°. At Khorsan, 5.40 P.M., it was 84°. At sunset, 7.15, we stood on the table-land of Persia.

For the next twenty miles we galloped by the light of the stars, and reached Kasvin about 10 o'clock, having ridden 108 miles in sixteen hours. Every limb and muscle felt like lead, and a second after I had stretched myself on the dusty floor of the travellers' room in the chappar khaneh I was fast asleep.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Ancient Royal City of Kasvin—What the Persian Table-land is like—Villages and Canauts—The Haunts of the "Old Man of the Mountain"—The Elburz Range—Terrible Heat—A strange Hotel Proprietor—Arrival in Teheran—Anecdotes about the Shah—The Shah's Palaces—His Thrones and Jewels.

TEHERAN, CAPITAL OF PERSIA, *June 11th*, 1870.

KASVIN or CASBIN was built to commemorate a victory gained over the Emperor Julian by Sapor II., at the commencement of the fourth century after Christ. It was adorned by Haroun Al-Raschid with many sumptuous buildings. Shah Tahmasp made it his capital, and enlarged it. Nadir Shah, the con-

queror of India and Afghanistan also, constructed a palace in it, rich in lacquered tiles, domes and towers ; but since Nadir's time Kasvin, though still proud of its palaces, and mosques and madressehs, of its spacious gardens producing every variety of fruit, and of its population of 100,000, has become a second-rate town, and is now famous only for its luscious grapes and wine.

Though it has lost its royal character, it affords the best example of a Persian city. The lanes are so narrow, that a man lying across would bar the passage. There are acres of mud ruins and ruined mud walls, and immense cemeteries with thousands of prostrate head-stones. Four or five mosques are still intact, but there is not much else to be seen in the sadly decayed city.

Our horses were brought out, after we had refreshed ourselves with an early breakfast.

Each time we left a chappar khaneh we made a galloping spurt, which lasted about an hour, we then moderated our pace, and were able to chat together. Kasvin appeared romantic from a distance ; its domes then had the charm of the east, and its fields of grapes and melons, cotton, and pistachios, and its orchards of almonds, oranges, plums, peaches, and nectarines, almost made one fancy that justice had not been done to it. But to return would have been folly.

Our road was hot and dusty. The level plain seemed to surge upward in thin tremulous vapour,

which made the hills on either side, about thirty or forty miles off, appear as though overspread with gold.

The plain consists of deep alluvial soil so calcined under the fierce sun that it is naked, and but a step removed from the desert of sand. But like the desert it has its little oases carefully guarded from plunder by embastioned villages, which resemble fairy castles or floating islands, as we approach them through the haze.

The walled villages cover on an average between thirty and forty acres, and are jealously surrounded by high mud walls, as if each village had a deadly animosity against its neighbour. They are generally built at the terminus of a canaut, where the water at last emerges out of it and flows level with the face of the plain. These canauts are a series of underground excavations, which commencing at the base of a mountain range slope down towards the middle of the plain. The first pit excavated is from fifty to sixty feet deep—and another pit is then commenced at about 100 feet from the mouth of the first, of nearly the same depth as the first, and a tunnel is bored through to connect the two pits ; and in this manner and at the same intervals a series of pits are dug, for five, ten, fifteen and sometimes twenty miles, connected underground by the tunnel through which the drainage has grown into a considerable stream of pure cold water, which serves to irrigate the village gardens.

The Elburz range, which is to the south-east of

Kasvin, had at one time an evil notoriety. It was the haunt of that mysterious individual known as the "Old Man of the Mountains." This individual had a garden which represented the ideal paradise of Mohammed, full of pleasant arbours and gay kiosques, with scores of the most lovely damsels, daughters of kings, princes, and chiefs, who had been captured by his arts. All young men who enlisted under his banner were first invited to a feast and supper with him, and were regaled with wines which soon reduced them to unconsciousness, in which state they were conveyed to the happy garden and left to sleep in the laps of fair women.

When they awoke from their stupor they were told that they had entered Paradise, and the Lord of the Mountains visited them in royal robes, and then and there instructed them in the rules which were prescribed for the celestials.

Inspired by such beauty and glory, they willingly took the oaths to observe the vows, and for one day, at least, revelled in sensuality and dissipation, and in the evening were again drugged into unconsciousness, and conveyed to their camps and fortresses. In the morning, awakening as it were from a dream, they were readily induced to believe in the divinity of their sect, and were consequently ready to accomplish all their chief's behests.

The daggers of this army of brigands carried dismay all over the east and west. Neither Christians nor Moslems were spared. Whoever incurred the

enmity of their vicious chief forfeited his life by the dagger of an assassin.

After the sect had reigned by terror for a hundred and sixty years, Helagon, the grandson of Genghis Khan invaded their principality and exterminated them, to the great relief of mankind.

The natives point out a ruin on one of the loftiest peaks near Kasvin as the remains of the principal castle of the Old Man of the Mountains.

To our left our view as we rode to Teheran was bounded by the mountains which go to form the Elburz range. On our right was a similar line of mountains, though not so continuous nor so high as Elburz. The plain between was as level as a billiard-table, except where it was disturbed by the tumuli of the canaut pits or broken by the walled villages.

Each village was as like the other as possible; the chappar khanehs were similar to those we had left behind. There were the same canauts, and the hillocks over their pits were alike. The people wore the same kind of dresses and the same kind of caps, and rode similar donkeys or mules. Everything on the plain, animate and inanimate, bore a like feature, and all day the heat was unvarying, and never less than 105°.

The only extraordinary feature visible was certain mounds which appeared at intervals along the plain. Externally there was no indication of their purpose, and their interiors have never been explored. They

are about 50 feet in height, and in circumference at the base from 200 to 500 feet.

About four farsakhs from Teheran, the road having inclined to the base of the Elburz, we saw a broad and deep gorge, out of which issued a fine river, called the Kerij, which waters Teheran.

The Elburz range, I noticed, was ascending into a higher altitude, and its summit was garnished by snow, and far away, behind the high mountain-tops, a gigantic peak, in the form of a sugar-loaf, was seen. This was Demavend, the "Home of the Genii," which is believed to be between 22,000 and 24,000 feet above the sea-level.

We now set our horses to the gallop, eager to see Teheran, the Persian Capital, before dark.

Near sunset we approached the fortifications of Teheran, which are evidently of European construction and design, and dashed under the Kasvin Gate, and rode galloping along a straight and shady Persian boulevard, round a meidan, where were some young poplars, big cannon, groups of staring soldiers and Persian citizens, then up a narrow lane, thronged with people, and halted, at last, before a hotel.

I bow before a Frenchman, who turns out to be the proprietor, and ask him to have mercy upon a wearied traveller, and give him a room for the night.

"Yes—but you have a letter of introduction from the Consul, of course?"

"A letter of introduction for an hotel?" I murmured, and asked—

"Is this not an hotel?"

"*Oui, oui,* but we do not take travellers without a letter of introduction from some person we know."

"You have many European travellers here then? What are they, may I ask?"

"Oh, they belong to the overland telegraph, and they are our friends."

"Oh, I am sorry, Monsieur, that I do not belong to the overland telegraph, and that I have not the honour of being one of your friends, but could you tell me where I could stay in Teheran for a night?"

"There are plenty of native caravanserais in Teheran. Travellers without letters of introduction stop at caravanserais."

"Ah, that's true, that's true, Monsieur, I shall not trouble you. Adieu, Monsieur!"

"Adieu, Monsieur!"

I had, fortunately, several letters of introduction with me, but I had hoped to enjoy a good night's rest at an hotel after the fatiguing ride, before presenting myself before the Russian Ambassador. But the curious custom of hotel proprietors in Persia left me no option.

In about a quarter of an hour we were before the gates of the Embassy. Guards stood at the entrance, and the Imperial flag of Russia waved over the portal. I was very dusty, exceedingly sunburnt; my small caravan of four horses appeared very mean. I sent my card and letter of introduction to the Ambassador,

and waited five minutes. An attaché came out, who bore a letter in his hand.

"Are you Monsieur S—— ?"

"Yes."

"Then the Ambassador welcomes you ; he gives you a suite of apartments ; he hopes you will honour his roof during your stay. M. Ambassador desires also your company for dinner. The hour is 7 P.M. *En grande tenue sil vous plait,* Monsieur."

Half an hour later the great bell of the Palace sounded for dinner, and the second secretary, M. Kreble, came to conduct me to the reception saloon, where I was formally presented to M. Beger and his staff, who received me most cordially.

On entering the dining saloon the Ambassador conducted me to a side-table, where stood several appetizers, in the shape of gins, brandies, bitters, caviares, and anchovies, and according to the custom of Russians, we each took a slice of bread, a bit of caviare, and a glass of liqueur.

When the soups were placed on the table we sat down to a sumptuous dinner, and afterwards we had cards, music, and a little dancing among ourselves.

It was midnight before we parted, but my first night's sleep at Teheran will never be forgotten.

About a hundred years ago this growing city was a small fortified village ; but on the death of Lûft Alla Khan, whose Capital was Shiraz, it was established as a royal city by Mahommet Aga, the eunuch, who became Shah of Persia, 1795 A.D. This prince was of

the Khojah or Kajar tribe which dwelt near Astrabad on the Caspian Sea.

After the stranger has viewed Teheran, and noted its position, the first question he naturally asks himself is, "Why was Teheran built here, upon a dry plain which has only one tiny stream, two yards in width, and three inches in depth, to supply the inhabitants with water?" The Kerij River was only twenty miles farther north, or if it were desirable to have a strongly fortified place, there was ancient Rhages or Rei, fortified, and surrounded almost by mountains, only five miles to the southward.

The Capital is said to have a population of 110,000 inhabitants. The palaces are numerous, the gardens are spacious, and carefully attended to, the bazaars are equal to those of Constantinople, the streets are full of life and business. In short, Teheran is a growing city. It has one advantage over almost every Oriental city: it is too far removed from the sea to be the resort of the Levantine. The people whom we meet are all Persians, with a sprinkling of Armenians, Afghans, Turkomans, Arabs and Jews.

The next morning after my arrival the Shah left his City Palace for one of his country palaces. Early in the morning a long train of baggage mules had been started, most of the animals being covered with crimson cloth. At about 11 A.M. the sweepers, who had been at work to make the streets clean for the feet of His Majesty's horses, drew up in a line on each side of the main street, which led from the

Palace towards the mountains, with their wooden spades and brooms held *à la militaire* at the shoulder.

In front of these lines, in open order, were the soldiers of the Shah, who, despite their good uniforms, appeared rather slovenly.

About half-past eleven the cortége rode past, consisting of 200 or 300 cavalry. Then came the Shah's carriage, a European barouche, with the Shah himself blazing with jewels. He bore himself like a despot born to the manner. While Prince-Governor at Tabreez he is said to have been amiable, and though most severe occasionally, he is yet considered mild compared to his immediate predecessor.

Perhaps some of the following anecdotes about him will illustrate the general opinion of him.

He asked his Vizier, some time ago, whether he would prefer to be relieved of his office, by which he makes annually immense sums through his extortions, or "Would he pay 12,000 tomans = $24,000, and be bastinadoed?"

The Vizier replied he would prefer paying the Shah $24,000 and be bastinadoed.

Nasr-ed-dîn clapped his hands, and the executioner, who is a low carpet-spreader by profession, was commanded to apply the bastinado a hundred times to the soles of His Highness.

Also during a famine in Teheran—by no means an uncommon thing—the people of the capital became riotous, and demanded that the Governor should distribute his hoarded corn to them. He replied to

the demands with harsh measures, which made them more mutinous, and the noise of the disturbances reached the ears of the Shah. The city Governor was sent for, and the Shah asked him, if he could not keep the peace. As this was the hour of justice, many women at a distance from the presence, raised cries of "Justice, justice, O Shah!"

"Stop, your Majesty, one minute," said the irate Governor, who rushed out, and administered personal castigation to several.

But the fury of the people increased, and the women continued to incite them to madness, and threatened that if they got no food they would take off their veils, and show their faces, like strumpets, to all men. Then the King ordered the Governor into his presence once more, and being implacable when roused, hissed out—

"Oh, thou little man, am I the despot Shah, or am I not? What dust hast thou been eating? Taharb, taharb," he shrieked (Rope, rope).

The ferashes rushed upon the unfortunate, and threw the rope round his neck, and in a second there were a dozen or more tugging at each end of the rope. His body was afterwards drawn through the street of Teheran by the many women whom he had starved and abused.

The people became satisfied by this act that the Shah was in no way privy to the conduct of those who had caused the famine.

The following incident may cast a light upon the

character of Nasr-ed-dîn Shah. It occurred only a few days ago, in the office of the Indo-European Telegraph. The Shah came to the office, and professed to be delighted with the neat apparatus of telegraphy which conveyed mysterious messages from London, New York, and San Francisco, to Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. He regarded the apparatus for a long time, and listened intently to the clicking, and then in an earnest tone begged of the Manager to explain how he manipulated the little round knobs so as to obtain intelligible reponses.

The explanations were received by the Shah with many exclamations of "Mashalla."

Then he wished to telegraph some state news to the Governors of Kûm, Kashan, Isfahan, Shiraz, and Bushire, but the words would not come out intelligibly—his fingers, he said, were dumb, they could not speak. So he beckoned one of his own employees of the telegraph office to the chair and ordered him to signal the several stations he had named, that they might notify the Governors that the Shah in person was in the office, and wanted to talk to them.

The Governors were soon waiting at the several offices.

Telegram 1, *to Kûm.*

"How much money hast thou for the Shah, Khan?"

(After a pause of about three minutes, the Governor, evidently considering) the response came thus:—

"When the Asylum of the Universe commands, the less than the least of his slaves, he will give all he is worth."

Telegram 2, *to Kûm.*

"How much?"

Answer. "10,000 tomans" (= $20,000).

Telegram 3, *to Kûm.*

"Send the money, the Shah commands, he is very pleased."

Telegram 4, *to Kashan.*

"The Shah wants money, how much hast thou to give him?"

Answer. "Whatever the Light of the World commands is at his service. 5000 tomans."

Telegram 5, *to Kashan.*

"Too little, give me 20,000 tomans, the Shah has said it."

Telegram 6, *to Isfahan.*

"Oh Khan! thou knowest thy position is a treasure. What wilt thou give the Shah to keep it? A man has offered me 50,000 tomans for thy place. Speak quickly, it is the Shah that is waiting."

Answer. "Oh, shadow of God, thou knowest I have been faithful, and thou hast but to speak. I have 60,000 tomans to give thee."

Telegram 7, *to Isfahan.*

"It is good, thou art a wise man. Send the money."

Telegram 8, *to Shiraz.*

"Khan, speak for thy life, and be prompt. There

are evil-minded men who wish for thy place. Art thou wise, and is thy hand open ?"

Answer. "The throne is the Tree of Wisdom. When the Shah speaks, the world trembles, the ears of his servants are open. I have 30,000 tomans ready."

Telegram 9, to Shiraz.

"The Amîn-ed-Dowleh offers me 45,000 tomans. Oh, thou little man, art thou mad-?"

Answer. "The Shah has spoken truly. I shall send 60,000 tomans."

From his telegram to Bushire he received answer that 10,000 tomans would be sent immediately. This is the Shah, and his ways of government. The handsome sum of 160,000 tomans, or $320,000, was netted in one morning. His Governorships are sold to the highest bidder.

For money one may obtain anything, from an "Order of the Lion and the Sun" to the Governorship of a Province. The liberal bakshîsh of which each Governor was thus mulcted the ryots were ultimately compelled to pay.

The Shah has seven palaces in the neighbourhood of Teheran—five at Isfahan, one at Fîn, two at Shiraz, and many more scattered about. He has over three hundred women in his harem, it is said. His jewels amount to $17,000,000 in value, his other treasures amount to about $5,000,000. His horses are over 400 in number, and his carriages are reported to be worth $350,000.

We amused ourselves with estimating the extent of the Royal property, and we found it to amount altogether to over $67,000,000. Of this immense property he is absolute master, and has besides an annual revenue of $10,000,000. Yet there is not one single half mile of railroad in the land, and, excepting about thirty miles near Resht, not one good turnpike.

$40,000,000 would construct a railroad from Resht to Bushire on the Persian Gulf, a distance of 800 miles.

What an unhappy country Persia must be under such a Government!

Now that the Shah had departed to one of his summer palaces visitors were allowed to inspect his Teheran Palace. The Russian Minister very kindly procured me a permit to visit it in charge of one of his gholams and an interpreter. We traversed a corner of the bazaar, and after proceeding through several dirty, dusty lanes, came to the Royal gardens, shaded by poplar, cypress and mulberry trees. In the centre of one of them was a large tank brim-full of water, about 200 feet long by 150 feet, where the soldiers and carpet spreaders off duty bathed.

In the last garden or court stood the palace, resplendent in its orientalisms.

That which principally attracted the eye was the gorgeous throne room of the palace, with its two spiry columns of spotted Shiraz marble, and divan of alabaster. Almost all travellers have called the divan a "finely sculptured marble throne," whereas I thought

it was neither finely sculptured, nor of marble, and it did not fulfil my idea of a throne. What I saw was a platform of alabaster about four feet high, resting upon lion-headed pedestals of spotted marble, which supported an alabaster divan, about eight feet square, very indifferently made. Over all its surface the chisel marks were visble even at a distance of ten feet from it. On great gala days the divan is covered with shawls from Cashmere and cloth of gold, and against the back is placed a magnificent cushion covered with a pearl network to support the king's back. The real throne, or the king's chair of state, is in a larger room, to the right.

The roof of this talar or deep open portico was covered with small pieces of mirror glass, diamond shaped, which reflected in the most brilliant manner the gay colouring of the walls. Persian artists had painted on each wall four or five large pictures, one of Nadir Shah chopping heads in true Persian fashion, another of Fath Ali-Shah, famous for his long beard, another of Mohammed Shah, and another of long moustached Nasr-ed-dîn Shah the present ruler.

The Royal Palace within the citadel consists of several detached structures, not one continuous building, which are ranged along three sides of two gardens which are called the Divan Khaneh-i-Shah or the Royal residence. The Defter-Khaneh Chaiber, or Treasury of records, the Sunduk-Khaneh, or box or trunk house, where the jewels, the robes and other valuables are kept. The Imaret-i-Kûrshid, or palace

of the sun, the Anderûn-i-Shah where the hareem is kept, the Imaret-i-Saristan or Palace of the Cypress, the Ghulistan or Garden of Roses, the Jebel Khaneh, the Arsenal of the Palace, and Keskehchir quarters or barracks for soldiers, the whole surrounded by brick walls about forty feet high, with towers placed at intervals on them.

As we walked up towards the Sunduk Khaneh where the treasures are kept, a lion advanced towards us, with a proud and stately step, which I took to be the living embodiment of the traditional Lion of Persia, whose image I saw upon every soldier's hat. I thought at first that he had escaped from the royal menagerie, and was seeking whom he might devour, but my interpreter assured me that he was only two years old and was a pet of the king, squatting often at his feet with the tameness of a dog.

The Sunduk-Khaneh appeared like a long wing, and is painted white with nothing really palatial in its appearance to distinguish it save its size. We ascended about a dozen steep steps, as all steps are in Persia, to the first floor, and then we saw the magnificence and richness of the interior.

The first room overlooked the garden through which we had entered and which presented all the graces of oriental horticulture, arboriculture, and floriculture; clumps of white and purple and crimson-flowered rose-bushes, plots of narcissus and hyacinth, arborets of fig-trees and willows, avenues shaded by creeping vines, hedgerows of box, smoothly swept

paths flanked by poplars and chenars, conservatories of foreign plants and trees, goodly plots of strawberries, fringes of azaleas, gillyflowers, sweet williams, and musk roses, with gleaming streaks of water and spurting fountains which constitute the Persian's ideal of a garden. The perfume from the flowers was almost oppressive.

The apartments of the Sunduk-Khaneh consisted of a crimson room, on the walls of which were heads of Persian beauties, alternating with frameless mirrors set in the walls, a smaller room containing a piano, a billiard table, two gilt harps, soft chintz divans, three cane-seated easy chairs and two tables, one of malachite, the other of cornelian stones joined together with such nicety, that you failed to detect their connection. Coming back to the front room we brushed the arras aside and entered the throne room, about 40 feet square, at one end of which blazed with indescribable brilliancy the throne, which Nadir Shah obtained at the conquest of the Mogul capital, from Mohammed Shah the eleventh Mogul emperor. The seat of the throne is four feet above the floor, its width is about three feet and a half, the height of the back is about nine feet, and on each shoulder of it rested a golden bird with outstretched wings.

The whole of the throne is covered with one-eighth of an inch gold plating, and in every square inch is embedded a large emerald, ruby, topaz, or diamond, surrounded by smaller jewels. Between the two golden birds at the top of the chair blazed a sun con-

sisting of the purest brilliants, the rays of which were described by radii of diamonds, garnets, topazes, rubies, and emeralds.

The ferash-bashi, or chief of the carpet spreaders, and executioner, uncovered the jewelled cushion on which the feet of the monarch rest when he is enthroned, and this is also set in pearls and diamonds. On each side of the throne were ranged twelve golden chairs, not of solid gold, as travellers have stated, but gold plated; these were also taken from the Mogul's palace by Nadir Shah. The walls of the room blazed with the reflections and brightness of a thousand mirrors which lined the walls and the semi-domed roof.

The effect of the whole may easily be imagined, though it would be tedious to describe.

In rear of the throne-room was a smaller one, where was stored many a treasured gift from foreign governments, such as clocks, Bohemian vases, china ware, *tête-à-têtes*, telescopes, oil-paintings of foreign monarchs, such as Louis XIV., Emperor Nicholas, George III., Frederick the Great, William IV., Napoleon I., Napoleon III. and Eugénie, Queen Victoria, Alexander II., and Victor Emmanuel. There were also a goodly number of rich weapons, and numerous articles of vertu.

The strongly-clamped jewel-box, containing drawers or trays lined with blue, purple, and crimson velvet, where nestled the concentrated brightness of all manner of jewels, was then brought out and shown

to us. The first tray contained four aigrettes of diamonds; the second tray, divided into compartments, contained handfuls of diamonds, emeralds, garnets, and rubies; the third tray contained the Great Daria-Nûr, or Sea of Light, which was rimmed with gold, wherein were set small diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, and was formed into a clasp for a belt. The Daria-Nûr is an oval, flat-faced diamond, faceted at the edges, about an inch and a-half long by an inch in width.

With the Daria-Nûr were several rubies of the size of Brazil nuts, and six large emeralds; one equalled the great diamond in size and value, while the other was an octagonal of the size of a pigeon's egg; and in a little compartment were about two hundred roughly-cut emeralds of the size of wren eggs. The fourth tray was somewhat deeper than the others, and contained in a compartment pearls of incalculable value. It seemed to me that there were dozens of them embedded in softest blue velvet, looking simply glorious in their beds. There were about twenty of unusually large size, three-quarters of an inch in diameter, if not more.

In the larger division of the tray were strings of large pearl beads and four large coronets of pearls, with probably fifty pearls in each coronet, each of equal size, and as large as pigeons' eggs. There were several broad bracelets of diamonds, of pearls mixed with emeralds, rubies and pearls, with various designs in diamonds in them; and half-a-dozen armlets about

four inches broad, flat diamonds alternating with flat emeralds three-quarters of an inch long, running in a central band round the armlet between rows of pearls and rubies.

There was another flat box which was bound with silver hoops, and was now brought out, and when opened exposed another marvel of lustre and wealth in the shape of three broad capes, which when put on would descend six inches below the neck all round the body. These three capes were principally of pearls and rubies sprinkled with the brightest kind of emeralds and garnets, edged with emeralds alternating with diamonds.

In another box were still more precious articles, *viz.*, four broad belts, which when unfolded looked liked cascades of purest diamonds. Then were shown three crowns of different patterns, one a tiara of three elevations, adorned with jewels of rarest value and matchless brilliancy; another crown was of purple velvet about eight inches high, covered with garnets, rubies, topazes, emeralds, pearls, surrounding large stars of diamonds that were ranged round it, and on the front were fixed black heron feathers mixed with aigrettes of brilliants, which looked like starry cressets burning behind as through black cloud; the other crown was like a tall cap, profusely decorated with jewels and hung round with large diamond drops.

The remaining treasures which were exhibited consisted of a scarlet coat with epaulettes of diamonds, and a triangle-shaped emerald on each

shoulder, and a band of diamonds six inches in width from the neck to the skirt, and around the skirt a hem of like jewels three inches in width ; a scarlet vesture sprinkled all over with different jewels ; a dark-coloured coat worn often by the Shah, with epaulettes, breast, and skirt blazing with diamonds, strongly contrasting with the dark cloth ; the sword of state, three scimitars of dark blue steel, keen enough to cut a hair held by the fingers, several long and short daggers ; the calioub of state, a bowl, the royal bow, double-barrelled guns, the whole sparkling with jewels of extraordinary size and of transcendent value.

Then were shown several trays and goblets and vases of solid gold, but these looked common-place after the wealth of precious stones whose lustre had fatigued the eyesight.

Most of these precious jewels were taken by Nadir Shah at the capture of Delhi about the year 1741 A.D.

The value of the treasure imported to Persia is believed to have exceeded £120,000,000.

From the Sunduk-Khaneh we proceeded to the Divan-i-Khaneh, the royal residence situated at the eastern end of the gardens. In the front of this palace rose two square towers five stories high, which promised a fine view of Teheran from their summit. Between the towers swelled a dome covered with turquoise-coloured tiles. Before the noble portal, which was reached by a flight of marble steps, stood two bronze lions in the act of roaring, mounted on alabaster pedestals.

After observing the elaborate arabesque and brilliant frets of the portal, we ascended a flight of narrow stairs in the left tower and we came to the first room. On the walls of this and other rooms some Persian artist had allowed his imagination to run unrestrained. With infinite industry he had endeavoured to paint his fancies on the walls of chambers which opened into one another, and where splendour upon splendour of paint, stucco, and fret was revealed.

In gold and azure, vermilion, green, orange, and pale blue were fantasies of verdure and bough, bud and tree, plant and flower, corolla and leaf, with birds and lions, and dragons and things innumerable. And most grotesque ideal of all amid this flood of orient hues, ranged round the walls of the first chamber in oval panels, were portraits of Spanish damsels, one exhibiting the beauties of her limbs during a fandango, another preparing for the bolero, another turning a pirouette. The portraits, I am told, were filled up by a French artist.

It would be tedious to describe the rooms in detail, but each differed in designs and decorations. The floors were covered with the costliest Persian carpets, upon which no one was allowed to step with his shoes on, for they were too precious to be soiled.

After visiting each room in succession we ascended to the top of one of the towers, from which a magnificent view of the whole palace and citadel, as well as of the city of Teheran, was obtained.

Below us were the delicious gardens of the Shah, beautiful for their green boscage and sparkling streams of water, which flowed over turquoise-tiled beds. We had a complete view of its labyrinthine paths and great reservoirs, where snowy swans floated on the surface, of spurting fountains which flash upon swarms of slaves who guard the palace, and lounged about everywhere; of rose-bushes which loaded the air with fragrance, of the ranges of palaces with their glow of orient colours, of arboretæ and shaded avenues, of the colossal wealth and splendour gathered into such a small space, encompassed by the citadel walls, to amass and concentrate which we know millions of human beings have suffered, thousands have been massacred; and to maintain which the millions of Persia must starve.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Bazaar of Teheran—Persian Dogs—The Royal Falconers—Rivalry between the Russian and British Embassies—The Negaristan Palace—The Royal Menagerie—Fath Ali Shah—Kasr-î-Kajar.

TEHERAN, *June 12th*, 1870.

THE Bazaar is the place to study the East; especially is it the place to study Persia and the Persians.

The bazaar to Teheran is what Broadway is to New York, or Bond and Regent Streets to London.

Everything is sold in the bazaars. One shop contained a hundred different kinds of spices, laid out in small bowls on many rows of shelves, the next sold antique armour, the next was a broker's shop or an exchange, the next sold ironware, the next was a goldsmith, the next was a jewel-merchant, the next sold carpets, and so on to everything you could name. Though there is a good deal of glitter and colour and reflection, most of the articles are mean and shoddy; it will not do to examine them too closely, save what is purely Oriental, and those are generally good and durable.

The Persian carpets are the richest in the world, their shawls are excellent, their table-cloths costly and splendid, their silks are above praise, their gems and jewellery are real, their brocades are valuable, the scimitars and swords from Khorassan, and daggers from Shiraz, are of well tempered steel. As for the things from Berlin, Paris, and Birmingham, with which these nests of shops are mostly stocked, they are of the cheap-jack kind, but they appeal through their gaudiness and cheapness to ignorant female minds, who love finery, and rate things according to their glitter.

A thorough examination of the Teheran Bazaar would occupy two days. It is a place to study the Afghan of Cabul, the fire-worshipper of Yezd, the Bagdadia, the Shirazene, the Isfahani, the Kûrd, and the Eiliaut of the mountains; and among these we see the Turk, the despised Israelite, and the Bokhariot.

I returned to the Russian Embassy through the most squalid quarter of Teheran, and here, as in European cities, one may see how near squalid poverty may approach royalty itself. On one side of the street are the enclosed houses of the miserablest peasants, but opposite is the king's garden of roses. With that grasping avarice which so distinguishes Persian Khans, we note how they have encroached on the public thoroughfares. Near the Russian palace a prince has actually taken four feet of a narrow lane to add to his garden. The street dogs, protected by no one in particular, patronised chiefly by the beggars, are a more obscene tribe than those which howl at night in the bye-lanes of Pera. These are attacked by some disease peculiar to Teheran, for I never saw it in any other Persian city, which eats into their noses and chaps.

There are numbers of good dogs in Persia, but the best of them are the greyhounds. These are particularly useful in hunting, as the hilly nature of the country precludes long racing with horses. Hares, antelopes, and the wild ass are captured by their aid. The Shah is said to be an excellent shot, and passionately fond of hunting, but of course his hunting is more like going out for a *fête* than a hard and laborious chase after game. While I am on the subject of hunting I may as well mention that the other auxiliary to this pleasure in Persia is the hawk.

The present Shah has upwards of fifty falconers in his service. A sultan in the sixteenth century,

possessed over 6000. How falconry was introduced into Persia I cannot imagine, unless it was by the Scythians of the trans-Caspiæ, who were famous in the art of training hawks to hunt at the sound of a human voice, as also were the Scandinavians.

The falconers of the Shah are often met on the Gulahek road returning from the bird chase, with their hawks on their arms, as true a picture of the Mediæval pastime as one can imagine.

There is great rivalry between the Russian and British Embassies at Teheran. The palace of the Russian Ambassador has only lately been built, and is a stately building, with a large garden in the rear and a spacious courtyard adorned with flower beds in front. Ostentation is a great aid to diplomacy in this land. Had I gone through the bazaar with half-a-dozen ferashes in front of me shouting, "way for the Grand Sahib!" I had not encountered the insolence of a Saki; and a merchant had not pripped at me. If a man wishes to do well in Persia he must travel with pomp.

The great powers also who wish to be represented must surround their representatives, with the show of wealth and that can only be done by a liberal expenditure.

Since the Russians have built their new palace and increased the pay of the minister to $20,000 a year they have been slightly in the ascendant, and the British have lost prestige. But now the English are building a palace, and offices for the Embassy which

are to cost over £50,000 sterling. I have seen the plans, and the foundations have been laid, with ten acres of a garden attached to it. The pay of the English Minister is $25,000 per annum, but the expenses of the Embassy, of keeping three secretaries, dragomans and attaches, and the keep of the palace amounts altogether to about £12,000 or $60,000. When the new palace is completed the British will no doubt regain some of their lost prestige, and it will be for the Russians to make another effort.

The Russian Minister requested me to take a drive with him, promising he would be my chaperone during the afternoon.

Just before the gate of his palace is a covered passage, through which we drove, and at the other end we crossed a moat. Along the palace side of the moat, on either side of the drawbridge were high walls of dried mud, and in the centre of these walls a lofty portal rose to the height of fifty feet to the top of the arch. The portal was encased in small tiles of pale blue, deep blue, pale green and yellow. This is the Persian style of ornamenting, a substitute for the Saracenic fret pigments. Two minarets towered directly over the passage we had but lately left, and from their tops the muezzin cry out the notice of the prayer hour to the Muslims. These minarets are not nearly so tall, and lack the beauty of the Turkish, and the architectual effect is mean. These were also encased with coloured titles set in mosaic. M. Beger said, "that the moat terminated the extent of

Teheran ; and that the gate was the ancient Kasvin Gate ; and that the two minars belonged to one of the principal mosques."

In the new portion of Teheran we found broader thoroughfares, on which the sun shone fiercely. After a quarter of a mile of a drive, the carriage halted before the gate of the Negaristan, another palace of the Shah, which has a large garden wherein is kept the royal menagerie, and which when the royal ladies are in the country is thrown open to the public. Near the gate were tied four young brown bears, which were captured in Mazanderan.

The garden was a perfect marvel of verdure. All trees indigenous to Persia were represented by young specimens which grew here in a most healthy fashion. The chenar rivalled the poplar in height, the cypress swept upward gracefully until its topmost twig reached the altitude of the chenar. The mimosa spread out its pendant boughs in the shape of a bower where we could see the bulbul, which have often occupied the poet's verse.

The white rose trees in the garden were like domes covered with snow, and the red rose bush resembled a coverlet of crimson silk.

In the middle of the garden was the summer-house of the Shah. The interior which we could see through the only broken pane of the coloured glass in the building, was a triumph of luxury.

The richest carpets covered the floor, and on one side was a divan covered with a gaily flowered carpet.

In the middle of the room was a tiny jet-d'eau of the thickness of a pipe stem, which as it dropped into the marble basin became fine spray. The building was of an octagonal form, with broad overhanging eaves, painted with vines and flowers of every tint. At each angle was a window of Persian coloured glass, cut into every imaginable design, which is the glory of a Persian house. Before the front, and behind the kiosk was a large reservoir of water, which is filled with fresh water every morning. At evening the gardens are watered from the reservoirs which are thus daily emptied.

About fifty paces behind the kiosk with the reservoir between them was the anderûn or hareem palace, an elegant white building surrounded by all that could delight the heart of a Persian female. Fountains, white and red roses innumerable, lilacs, geraniums, a wilderness of aromatic shrubbery, leafy arcades, tall trees, pheasants, guinea hens, a multitude of proud peacocks, a numerous population of nightingales, a large aviary where were birds of a hundred species, white and grey rabbits, running by scores through the gardens perfectly tame, more than two dozen antelopes, deer with wide branching horns, a small monkey house, and close by was the menagerie which contained lions from Shiraz, tigers from Ghilan, panthers, leopards, wolves, foxes, lynx, hyænas, &c., what more could the Shah's women wish?

We took to our carriage again, and drove up the Gulahek road, which is the boulevard of Teheran.

It is fifty feet wide, and was made by an Austrian General who has taken service with the Shah. The road is macadamised, flanked on each side by a ditch and a row of trees among which mingle a few crocuses, sunflowers, and gillies.

It is called the King's Road, because it leads towards the Kasr-î-Kajar, and other palaces. The foreign Ambassadors have the privilege of using it, as well as the rich and noble Persians.

The Persians have not yet acquired the habit of trotting about every evening to show themselves and their horses to an admiring public, so the boulevard is not so much frequented as it might be.

Fath or Futteh Ali Shah, grandfather of the present Shah, was accustomed to divert himself with his women in a most curious manner. He would sit beside the great reservoir near the hareem, and having selected the fairest of his 800 concubines, would command them to undress, and slide down a smooth plank arranged for the purpose, into his arms, and he would then pitch the lovely things into the water enjoying himself greatly while watching their endeavours to swim.

It may not be out of place to mention here that Fath Ali Shah, though he had 800 concubines, possessed but four lawful wives. It is said that he was the father of 1130 sons and 160 daughters, and that his descendants number to-day over 5000!

Every summer evening the stranger by driving up the boulevard will meet the Teheran fashionables

returning to the city from their long attendance on the Shah or some of his Ministers. A Teheran fashionable indulges his vanity by mounting his Arab barb, which is decorated with superb gold and silver trappings, and sallying forth with a retinue. A syce mounted on a fast horse precedes him by about forty paces, to clear the way for his Sahib, three men ride on either side of him, who appear to think that they should monopolise the whole highway for their master, and six mounted men bring up the rear, one of whom carries the Sahib's pipe of state, and a little grate filled with charcoal fire on one side of his horse and a jug of water on the other side, another is a handsome page supposed to be accomplished in his duties, another carries his master's arms, the remaining three are supernumeraries. Thus escorted the Sahib curvets and pranks about, and is admired according to the beauty of his trappings and the excellence of the turn out.

Two or three such fine Sahibs with their little army of followers, afford sufficient insight into what takes place upon the Teheran boulevard, and into the mode of travelling by the great of this country. A great many of the rich Khans following the example of the Shah have taken to importing carriages, but this is considered by some to be a sign of degeneracy.

In going out past the grounds of the new British Mission House and in returning to the city we passed the fortifications constructed by General Gasteiger, and an Italian engineer. They are not completed yet,

but they are so far advanced as to have a moat 15 feet deep and 25 feet wide, and a high and broad embankment of earth. The moat can be easily flooded by the canaut from the Kerij, and the mountain stream which runs through Shîmran. There are enough guns mounted not forgetting the great gun of Kerîn Khan of Shiraz, and the Camel artillery, to make a great deal of noise. But so far as I have seen, the fortifications are very feeble.

Teheran is not situated in the lowest part of the plain, otherwise the Kerij river would be running of its own accord close to, or into the city, therefore the moat can be drained as often as it may be filled up, by parallels which would convey the water into the low lands.

Kasr-î-Kajar, or the castle of the Kajars, commands the city, but besiegers would probably avail themselves of the strength of the ancient Rhages, which is but five miles south. Gasteiger and his Italian confederate have done what they could to remedy the folly of Mohammed Aga. Had the latter chosen Ancient Rhages as a site for his new city and capital a longer resistance might be maintained against an invader.

Of course these modern fortifications were erected as a precaution against Russian designs.

The principal safety of Teheran lies not in these, but in its distance from the Caspian, being 208 miles from that sea, and more than all in the inhospitable nature of the country. It is not necessary for me to

repeat here that Persia south of Ghilan and Mazanderan is but little better than a desert. Russian troops could advance with ease as far as Khorsan, about 100 miles from the Caspian, but a further advance would be a task of danger, as the canauts could be easily filled up.

At night I took a promenade through several of the streets of Teheran. As yet there is no gas in this city, and the pedestrians at night are compelled to carry lanterns with them. These lanterns are of creased paper decorated with painted figures around the sides. When unused they may be folded up in small compass in a thin box. The lantern is regarded in Persia as an insignia of wealth and consequence. When we meet a very small one we may be sure it is a peasant who carries it, if we meet a large one unpainted we may set the bearer down as a poor tradesman, if we meet a large and gaily decorated lantern we are to believe him to be rather well off; but if we chance across two or three or six lights, we must be ready to walk quickly on one side lest maltreatment might follow, for he is a khan of consequence surrounded by ferashes.

A late Persian minister to St. Petersburg was on his way to a theatre soon after his arrival at that city, and he was surprised to see that nobody carried lanterns with them at night, upon which he asked his servant the cause.

The interpreter replied that lanterns were of no use when gas furnished such a good light. "But," asked

the ambassador, "do not rich people have lanterns carried before them?"

"Certainly not," replied the interpreter.

"Not even ambassadors?" asked the astonished Persian.

"Why, no."

"Well, but I shall have mine, and I think it very undignified in great personages not to have them, as they indicate his wealth and position. I will not insult my Shah and mighty master, whose representative I am, by abandoning the custom of Persia."

In the progress of a tour I made next morning through the city I passed by the Old Mission House of the Russians.

A very tragic tale is connected with it, for there M. Griboyedov, the Russian ambassador, and his entire suite, save one secretary, were murdered by the populace of Teheran in 1829. The cause as described by M. Beger was that M. Griboyedov, who was a literary man and a brilliant poet, had an inordinate faith in the greatness of his government, and constantly threatened the Persians with dread possibilities if they did not submit to the wishes of the Czar, which grew to be very irritating, until at last it culminated in open hostility between himself and the Ministers of the Shah.

One day a Georgian slave, who was a Christian and a Russian subject, was purchased by one of the Persian ministers and kept in his harem for many years; but being abused by the matron of the Ande-

rûn, took refuge in the Russian ambassador's palace, claiming protection as a Russian subject. The Persian demanded that the ambassador should surrender the Georgian, which he peremptorily refused.

The Persian, maddened at his loss, spread a report through the bazaar that the Russian Elchi had abducted a Mohammedan woman from a harem. This was sufficient to fire the fanatical sheahs to take the most summary revenge. The Shah heard that the bazaar was vowing destruction, and sent a messenger to inform the ambassador of what might occur, and to beg of him to consider before it was too late.

Griboyedov did not believe the Teherani would proceed to extremities, and again refused to give her up. The next morning the people armed themselves and poured furiously towards the embassy. The gates were shut, and the Cossack guard of four men was ordered to fire on the mob when it commenced hostilities.

The people broke down the gates and walls, and swarmed into the courtyard of the palace, the Cossacks taking refuge in the first storey with the minister and his suite, consisting of first and second secretaries, first and second dragomans, Persian scribe, and physician, cooks, servants, and grooms belonging to the embassy. When the ambassador saw that the people were determined, he offered to surrender the Georgian, but it was now too late. The people commenced a

fusilade, shooting at the windows of the embassy, which was replied to with all the arms the Russians could muster. The whole population of Teheran was in rebellion, and all the men of the city seemed to be concentrated around the palace.

While thousands of people were firing at the Russians from the court and gardens, and neighbouring house, hundreds climbed the roof to force an entrance into the interior, which they speedily effected. It was useless to hope combating against such odds. Within a few minutes the Russians, with the exception of one secretary, were all dead men, and their bodies after suffering the grossest indignities were decapitated, the body of the ambassador serving as a special object of their malevolence.

The Shah, fearing awful reprisals on the part of Russia, hastened to despatch his eldest son to St. Petersburg with rich presents, and offered him as a propitiatory offering to the Czar's vengeance. After his arrival at the Russian capital, the prince sent notice to the Emperor Nicholas, and requested an early audience. On being ushered into the imperial presence, it is said that the prince advanced to the emperor, and presenting his scimitar to him begged, that, as he had been commanded by his father to offer his life as an atonement to the Czar for the murder of his embassy by a wilful people, he would cut his head off with his own hand.

Nicholas, however, was so pleased with his

courageous conduct and filial devotion, that he embraced him, and took him into high favour.

On a spur of the Elburz which approaches to within a few miles from Teheran, is the mosque of Shah Abdul Azzim, with a gilded dome, in the midst of a village of about five hundred families. As no European is permitted to view this sanctuary of Sheeah bigotry, it is useless to pretend to know anything of it, save of its exterior, which is most handsome. This is one of the famous mosques of the Persian, and stands fifth in the list of the most holy.

First is the great mosque of Mecca. Second is that of Kerbela, containing the tombs of Ali and his son Hussein, third is that of Fatima at Kûm, fourth is that of Mesched in Khorasan, and the fifth is Shah Abdul Azzim. Any murderer or ruffian charged with the grossest deeds upon taking refuge in either of these is safe, so long as he is within the walls.

In the vicinity of this mosque are found the ruins of Rhages. 700 years before Christ, Tobit journeyed from Nineveh to Rhages, or Ragau, a city of Media. Nebuchadnessar took Arphaxad, the founder of Ecbatana, on its hills, and smote him through with his darts, and destroyed him utterly that day (see Judith). Alexander on the eleventh day of his march from Ecbatana, in search of Darius, 331 B.C., halted before Rhages. The city is also mentioned by Ferdûsi, in his Shah Nameh, and it is stated by chroniclers that Harûn-al-Raschid was born here. In

the days of the hero of the Arabian Nights, Rhages, Ragau, or Rei numbered 96 districts, each of which had 46 streets, each street 400 houses. According to this statement the city had 4416 streets, and 1,766,400 houses ; allowing but five persons to each house, it had a population of 8,832,000. Another Persian writer describes Rei as a city so populous and wealthy, that its gardens met those of Isfahan, which is a distance of 250 miles. And the Amin Ahmed, the writer of "Haft Aklim" or "Seven climes," entering into more details than any other Persian author, says that in the time of Arbadi, Rei had 6400 colleges and schools, 1760 baths, 46,400 mosques, 1200 water mills, 12,700 caravanserais, 15,035 minars, 450 ice houses, 13,091 canauts ; that each mosque was lit up each night by 1000 lamps of gold and silver, and other valuable metals, and that there were eight thousand three hundred and ninety-six uninhabited houses.

Another native poet says that he had heard that from Isfahan to Rei the houses were contiguous like reeds, growing closely together, so that if a blind person were willing he might go from the flat roof of one house to another the whole way between Rei and Isfahan.

Gibbon, writing of Mahadi, the immediate descendant of the conquerors of Persia, describes his journey to Mecca. "In a single pilgrimage to Mecca, Mahadi expended 6,000,000 dinars of gold. A pious and charitable motive may sanctify the foundations of

cisterns and caravanserais, which he distributed along a measured road of 700 miles; but his train of camels laden with snow could serve only to astonish the natives of Arabia and to refresh the fruits and liquor of the royal banquet. The courtiers would surely praise the liberality of his grandson Almamon, who gave four-fifths of the income of a province, a sum of 2,400,000 gold dinars, before he drew his foot from the stirrup."

"At the nuptials of the same prince, a thousand pearls of the largest size were showered on the head of the bride, and a lottery of lands and houses displayed the capricious bounty of fortune."

Tradition declares Rei to have been founded by Seth the son of Adam, and that it was once honoured by the presence of an angel of God.

If we were to believe ancient history it has suffered greater calamities through earthquakes, battles, sieges, and massacres than either Jerusalem, Damascus, Constantinople or Baghdad.

I stood on one of the hills above Rhages and looked down on what now remains of it. The deep hollow which is presented to me as I gaze down from the summit of one of its natural fortifications is as forlorn as the dunes which cover the halls of Khorsabad. There are two round towers in view. The furthest to the south seems to have been a watch tower, its wall is rent from top to bottom. There are lines of defences of sun-baked brick thirty, forty, fifty, and sixty feet in height and an average thickness of fifteen

feet. There is a large square citadel near the village of Shah Abdul Azzim, flanked with towers, and buttressed by *débris*. It is formidable yet, though it has stood the wear and tear of centuries. You may distinguish the western tower of the fortifications fronting towards Ecbatana and Nineveh, and we may suppose that this is that which admitted the Angel of God who came from Tobit, and opened its great doors to the victorious Alexander.

The ground is strewn with bits of pottery and pieces of brick, among which is frequently found relics of arms and remnants of oxidized metal, as well as gold dinars, and silver money of the Sassanians. On the summits of the cliffs and time-worn rocks are seen fragments of stone and adobe walls, and an isolated fragment of a tower here and there.

And this is all that is left of great Rhages, capital of Media, of the Europa of Seleucus Nicator, the splendid city of the Arsascidae and Sassanians, of the Rei of Haroun-al-Raschid, of Mahadi the Caliph who reigned from Bussora to Samarcand, of the populous city which defied Cyrus, Alexander and Antigonus, and which was strong enough to dare the thousand legions of Genghis Khan, and Timour Leng to the attack, and whose glory ended with Shah Rûhk its last king.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Indo-European Telegraph—Hospitality of the Officials—The Stations between Teheran and Isfahan—Day and Night Travel—The Salt Desert—Kûm—"Prussia and France"—Pasangûn—Sin-Sin—Terrible Heat—Kashan—Shrubless Plains—The Approach to Isfahan.

ISFAHAN, *June 19th*, 1870.

THERE is another subject connected with Teheran that I must mention, and that is the Indo-European Telegraph.

Over two years ago the Persian and Russian Government agreed to sanction the construction of the Indo-European telegraph line which connects India with Europe overland.

A company was formed after that name by Messrs. Siemens and Halske, who obtained concessions from the Governments concerned, and subscribed one-fifth of the necessary capital. The European portion of the line extends from London to Emden, thence to Berlin, Warsaw, Odessa, Kertch, thence by a marine cable to Constantinofka, thence "to Tiflis by land, whence it runs southward and eastward by Julfa, Tabreez, and Teheran. The Indo part of the line runs south to Kûm, Kashan, Isfahan, Shiraz, Bushire, thence by cable to Kurrachi and from Kurrachi by land to Bombay and Calcutta.

From Emden to the Russian frontier the line has been constructed by the Russian Government through Persia and northern Persia by Siemens and Halske, from Teheran south by the English. It is furnished with two strong wires, the poles are mainly of cast iron. I have seen it in Southern Russia and between Kasvin and Teheran, and as I proceed to the Persian Gulf the line will be constantly in sight. It is said to have cost over £100,000. Before the Red Sea cable was laid the Indo-European paid very well, but as it barely gets one-half of the traffic, and as its expenses are much higher than those of the cable, it is difficult to compete with the cable as a private company's line. I have heard that Siemens and Halske have offered it to the Persian Government, as it is in Persia where the expenses amount to most. The Persian Governors do not like the telegraph at all as it sends a dismissal to the Governors too suddenly, and there is not much arguing allowed by the telegraph, consequently there is much hostility towards it, and towards the operators.

A Governor at Abadsk was bold enough to say that the telegraph lied, when the Prince Governor of Shiraz sent him a reprimand, and a threat to expel him if he did not behave better.

"Do you laugh at my beard?" asked the irate Governor, after the operator handed him the dispatch, and he had read the ominous significance of the message. "Will you dare tell me that that iron line can talk? Out with you for an

idiot, and a liar, else you will forget how to draw breath!"

The Persian peasants, and caravan people, are also as destructive to the thick wires of these lines as the Shohoes were to the copper field wires in Abyssinia.

The Persian peasant looks up to the wire as furnishing means for a wire cane, his wife thinks a couple of small pieces of it would make nice hooks for her pots and kettles, the caravan driver would like a piece of it to prick his donkey, or camel faster, and they shin up the pole and cut it, to repair which gholams must be sent from station to station.

Were the line in the hands of the Persians, its usefulness would be gone. Once cut, it would remain so for a week, as the Persians have not the slightest idea of the value of time, but in the hands of the English it is repaired without any delay.

Teheran is one of the principal stations of the Indo-European Telegraph. There are two officers of the telegraph in the same building, one in the charge of Mr. Nelson, superintendent of Siemens line from Teheran to Tiflis, the other in charge of Major Smith of the Royal Engineers who superintends the Persian part of the line from Teheran to Bushire. Major Smith has in his department, Captain Pearson, Mr. John Preece, Lieutenant Chambers 45th Regiment, Mr. Daniells, Mr. Walton, and Mr. Holtzer at

Isfahan, Captain St. John, and Captain Lovett of the Royal Engineers at Shiraz, and Sergeant Isaacson at Bushire.

With the usual liberal salaries which are obtained in India, Major Smith receives annually $10,000, Captain Pearson $7,500, Lieutenant Chambers $4,000, Mr. Daniells $3,500, Mr. John Preece $3,000, Mr. Walton at Isfahan $4,000, Mr. Holtzer $3,000, Captain St. John at Shiraz $5,000, Captain Lovett $4,000, and Sergeant Isaacson at Bushire $2,000.

The staff of operators are nearly all picked men from the Royal Engineers, sergeants, corporals, and privates, to the number of forty, who receive an average salary of $800. Here are nearly $80,000 expended in salaries alone on a line not exceeding 600 miles, i.e., from Teheran to Bushire. No wonder that messages of twenty words from India to London cost $14.

Travellers are indebted to these Englishmen for innumerable courtesies. Their houses are open to all, free of charge—for according to them they receive the benefits, not the travellers. Notwithstanding their enthusiastic assertions, I must say were it not for them, many a poor traveller would fare hardly.

The distance to Ispahan, or Isfahan, as the natives call it, is seventy-four farsakhs (south of Teheran a farsakh is about half a mile shorter than the farsakh of Ghilan and Mazanderan) or 259 miles.

I present the intervening stations in tabular form :—

Teheran to	Kinaragird	7½ farsakhs.
„	Haûz-i-Sultan . . .	6 „
„	Pûl-i-dellak	5 „
„	Kûm	4 „
„	Pasangûn.	6 „
„	Sin Sin	6 „
„	Kashan	6 „
„	Kûhrûd	8 „
„	Bedishk	6½ „
„	Mûrchakhar	7 „
„	Gez	7 „
„	Isfahan	5 „
		Farsakhs 74 = 259 miles.

My friends among the English colony at Teheran gave me several wise admonitions, among which were, that I was never to travel during the day, on account of the heat, but to start just at sunset, by which I might make two stations before I halted, then after an hour's rest I might easily make two more before morning. I was also to look out for myself, as there were numerous brigands on the road, who would not scruple to strip me of everything I possessed. The Eliats especially were much to be dreaded, as they were in the habit of adding abuse to robbery.

I followed their advice for the first few stages ; but as the rocks retain the heat, I think the discomfort of night-travel is greater than that of day. Besides the drowsiness was overpowering, and I was constantly in danger of falling from my horse. The monotony of the journey was also terrible. The landscape had no interest, the mountains appeared but shapeless masses,

and the plains were vague and oppressively silent. As I reached Hauz-i-Sultan, I was resolved not to expose myself to a repetition of the numerous inconveniences of night travel again.

We left Hauz-i-Sultan by daylight. This place consists of a ruinous caravanserai, and a miserable village of flat-roofed houses of sun-baked clay.

We reached the salt desert of Persia after a ride of five miles over a country which steadily became more sterile and waterless. Fortunately it was an angle of it which we crossed and only four miles wide, but the fervor of that short tract was intense. My thermometer indicated 129° F. Yet this terrible tract, with its fervid glow and its expanse of pale yellow sand almost at white heat, was far more bearable by day than a night ride through it would have been—for though I could distinguish nothing but a quivering vapour, the strange forms of the mirage were more agreeable than the monotonous darkness.

The salt desert is a vast ocean of sand, which stretches for about 600 miles to the south-east. We travel along its edge as far as Kashan for 140 miles, but its saline border has several green oases. Every stream of water, however, between Teheran and Isfahan is more or less brackish.

To reach Pûl-i-dellak we had to cross the desert of Kevir, 17½ miles in width. We had thus a taste of the desert, but we fortunately began the journey with fresh horses.

I had never seen a more ungrateful and useless

tract. The longer we stayed in it the more we suffered. The salt grains lay like rime over the lifeless plain ; the wind whisked them into pillars, which revolved and glided over the ground with the motion of a dance, and our faces became scorched with the hot salt and sand. But Kûm, the sanctuary of the pious sheiks, shrine of Fatima and many a holy Imam, was ahead. A wonderful series of hills and mountains are around it—of the colour of lava and the formation of vitrified waves. To the north-west of Kûm, at the distance of a couple of farsakhs, is an isolated group of lofty peaks, whose Persian title means, "Away—return no more." Why? The forbidding appearance of the plains, their gloomy aridity, dark and dry as a coal yard, interprets for us.

The map has marked down three rivers, which seem to congregate here, the Rud-i-Anarbûr, the Abishûr, the Karasû. They come from south, from west and north-west, and seem to conflow between Pûl-i-dellak and Kûm. But we have travelled the entire distance, and are now within a couple of miles from the latter, in view of the golden dome of Fatima's Mosque—one of the most holy mosques of the Mussulman world, and we have not seen water enough to fill a pint cup.

Within a few hundred paces of Kûm, we passed the wide waterless bed of the Rud-i-Anarbûr. We looked intensely at the city—the city, alas, for those poets who sacrifice truth to style, who under the mask of fiction, disguise the living reality. There is nothing worthy of the name of a city here, except a

city of the dead, who lie in unnumbered thousands around.

It is mainly a wilderness of ruins, covering an area of about two square miles. There are numbers of mausoleums scattered outside the city, and many a lacquered dome rises above the flat-roofed houses. Scanty tufts of foliage may be seen here and there, amid the waste, and a rather dense growth surrounds the holy shrine and gilded dome of Fatima. For about a mile and a half from Kûm stretch its corn-fields, its gardens of melons, pistachios, &c., various canauts leading from the "Mountain of the Talisman," "Kûh-e-Telesm," and from the hills of the "Away, return no more," there flows a stream, about two yards wide, and six inches deep.

We plunge across these canauts towards the ruined walls, and through a yawning gap, make our way towards the telegraph station, where we receive "a hearty welcome." The English telegraph operators order more vegetables to be cast into the soup pot, a larger quantum of water in the kettle for the hot pot of tea, some more scraps of mutton into the stew-pan, and they promise to give us enough to eat, but warn us to be satisfied with what they have, as Kûm is "awfully poor." We are recommended also to take a wholesome plunge into the tank, and find its waters to be a grateful restorative.

Afterwards I absorbed a kettleful of tea, three quarts of a seidlitz decoction, one quart of nearly boiling water and a pint of beer, and yet I found the

thirst growing on me after that ride through the merciless desert.

We whiled away the early night hours in conversations about manners and customs of foreign lands, especially of Persia, and then retired to sleep upon the house-tops, with the skyey canopy resplendent with twinkling stars, a sleep from which not all the jangle of Timurs Camp would have awakened me.

The next day I wandered through bazaars, ruined streets and lanes of Kûm, and saw acres of prostrate houses, and walls and mosques. Kûm is a hotbed of bigotry, despite its desolation. It is the home of indolence, unthrift, and superstition. It is a rendezvous of dead sheeahs. To obtain the happy distinction of laying their bones close to the beloved Fatima those who can afford it pay large sums.

As St. Patrick is said to have effectually banished serpents from Ireland, so is Kûm said to have been rid by a holy Imaum of all snakes, scorpions, and tarantulas, which ever since have taken refuge in the "Mountains of the Talisman." But as an impartial eyewitness of a fact, I can state that I saw a fight between a scorpion and a tarantula in the courtyard of the telegraph station. They were both imprisoned in a broad and pale glass bottle. Upon being stirred with a slender stick intruded through the neck of the bottle, and pushed one upon the other, the tarantula embraced the head of the scorpion, and inflicted a sharp sting in the back of its head, and the tail of the scorpion instinctively bent in a sudden curve, and

struck the barrel body of the tarantula. Then they both separated and confronted each other fiercely.

We baptized these vicious insects, the tarantula—Prussia, the scorpion—France. Two seconds elapsed, and the tarantula's prongy antennæ were again round the neck of the scorpion, and the latter turned a somersault with its tail, and darted its venom into the neck of the former. They again withdrew, but the tarantula was full of ire, and moved to flank and rear with lightning celerity, and finally had its enemy at a disadvantage, inflicting a severe bite in its side. The battle lasted fifteen minutes, resulting in a victory to the tarantula ; but the latter had suffered woefully also, and before morning was dead.

The Mollahs of Kûm permit no intoxicating liquors to be made in their city, which is the very palladium of the Sheeah religion. Nevertheless vulgar rumour whispers that though no liquor is made in Kûm it is imported in abundance from Kashan under the name of arrack.

Kûm is famous for its manufactures of bottles, porous jars, glassware, and fireproof brick, as well as vari-coloured tiles. Poppies, cotton, barley, wheat, melons, are grown in and outside the city. The population may be about 15,000, principally of Mollahs, dervishes, and Sayids. The remains of Fath Ali Shah, grandfather of the present Shah, lie buried close to Fatima's tomb. Shahs Sefi, Abbas II., Suleiman, and Hussein are also buried here.

After a day's rest at Kûm we resumed our journey

to Kashan, which is distant sixty-three miles. We reached the open plain after traversing over a mile of ruined houses. To our right we could see fields of stubble, to our left the desert. After a ride of a farsakh and a half we passed Langarûd, an insignificant town in an oasis.

The ruined houses present vestiges of architecture denoting ancient opulence, and its thick and cool groves of cypress, pine, willow, and mulberry, and gardens overrun with spontaneous vegetation, and watered by a delicious stream which takes its rise from the range west of Kûm, suggest that it must have been once a favoured retreat.

Pasangûn has a noble old caravanserai, and a chappar khaneh. From this point, extending as far south as Dalak, the traveller will think gratefully of Shah Abbas the Great, whose munificence expended itself in constructing these enormous caravanserais, and supplied each of them with wells and streams of water. Without these noble edifices, some of which would accommodate 2000 men, the burning plains of Persia would be as impassable as the sands of Arabia Petrea.

To the east of Pasangûn are the extensive ruins supposed to be those of Kasamabad. About three farsakhs south of Pasangûn we came to the caravanserai of the Ab-i-shûr. A small stream of fresh water runs close to it, whence the name of the building. Half way between Ab-i-shûr and Sin Sin is the ruined village of Dah-i-Naar, which was destroyed by

vindictive nomads. Sin Sin has also a fine caravanserai, and close to it are the remains of the village, which formerly must have been very populous.

We travel over another waste of sand beyond Sin Sin and half way to Kashan pass Nushabad, famed for its water melons. Five miles from Kashan its lacquered and bluish dome rises to view, among a seemingly unbroken mass of houses, and a wide extent of gardens.

Soon a new broad street opens to view, with some very neat houses on the right hand side. The telegraph station is on our left, but we hasten to the chappar khaneh, as the thermometer marks a temperature of 118° Fahrenheit—though Kashan is 6000 feet above the sea. My interpreter fills my bed tick with chopped straw, and then sets about cooking a dinner of pilaf and stewed fowl, and concocting a compound of syrup and water, while my servant, when not contemplating the lamentable condition of his body, lends his assistance to the chef.

Half dozing on the humble bed of straw, I revolve in my mind all that may be said of the pleasure of travelling, and come to the conclusion that travelling on the Persian table-land is anything but pleasant. The flies in the meantime buzz angrily in my ears, make havoc of my roasted nose, and torment each unguarded spot. As I look round the bare walls of my lodging, I see that, though once whitewashed, they are now defaced by charcoal marks and the scribbles of Persian poetasters.

Kashan contains a population of about 25,000. It is a very old city, and is mentioned in Gibbon as one of the great cities of Persia. It contributed great numbers of cavalry and infantry to support Yesdegherd against the Caliph of Baghdad. It possesses manufactories of shawls, silks, and carpets, and has a deserved reputation for the excellence of its brocades.

Its fruit and vegetable productions are various and abundant. The grapes are especially delicious, out of which the Persians make a good wine. Two farsakhs beyond Kashan the Taurus range inclines south-south-east, and the highway, or rather chappar road, inclines south-south-west. The plain over which we ride is rugged and drear, though the canaut stream which waters Kashan runs for many miles close to the road.

Half way to Kûhrûd we begin the ascent of a steep hill, which leads into the pass of the Taurus. Close to the bottom of the hill runs a very fine stream, on the banks of which are vestiges of Guebr-abad or the "abode of the fire-worshippers." From the summit of the hill we have a fine view of the desert; but one glimpse of its pale and vast expanse is enough to destroy all desire of ever revisiting Persia.

Kashan seems at our feet, and far away beyond the waterless and scorching desert plain and the "Mountains of the Talisman" we could faintly distinguish Demavend, the tallest peak west of the Himalayas. It was 170 miles distant from us.

We galloped for a mile on our way, and came in

view of a palatial caravanserai resting on a hilly platform surrounded and folded in by the towering crests of the Taurus Alps. Once more breathing a blessing on good Shah Abbas, we rode down to the left of the building, and, descending over 200 feet, were in the depth of the great ravine which cleaves the range of Taurus in two, and permits access to the plain below.

Presently we saw a strong and high wall which had been constructed from hill to hill across the ravine as a dam to retain the surplus water from the snow which falls on the mountains in winter. A narrow arch at the bottom of the dam permits sufficient water to run for the uses of irrigation for the people of Kashan.

A waste of peaks and mountains now enclose us, one surmounting another, their slopes well sown with rocky fragments.

Just as day faded into twilight we ascended into a much higher altitude, where we were gratified by the sight of gardens and orchards of fruit trees, of tall grass, beds of cress and nutritious plants. We were still in the pass ; but the view of the green vegetation enfolded by those magnificent but thirsty mountain walls afforded a rare pleasure by the contrast presented.

For two miles more we journeyed, the orchards becoming larger, chestnut trees taller, and the leafage knit together into a network over the road, completely shutting out the mountains from view. We reached

the chappar station as the deepest shades of night settled over our narrow world.

Kûhrûd is a village crowning a projection of rock on the western slope of the mountain, proudly overlooking the wide ravine below it. Every shelf and terrace in the neighbourhood was clothed with corn, while the lower hills were sheets of young grass. Looking downward from the station, which stood close to the edge of the leafy groves, we saw cornfields, which continued sloping upward with graceful slant, until they were abruptly arrested by a stiff scarp of the talc rock, the edge of the precipice hedged off or walled with loose rocks. Over these rose the flat-roofed houses of the village, rising like gigantic steps, while above all stood the mountain of Taurus.

On our journey to Bedishk we climbed up the ravine for a couple of miles, and on gaining the highest altitude of the gap, discovered that the verdure had entirely disappeared.

The route beyond is down the southern face of the Taurus, and then over a successive series of low hills to Soh or Son, a queer agglomerate of mud-houses, piled over each other until the whole presents the appearance of a lofty mud castle. From Soh we proceeded to Bedishk, where the sun appears to have literally scorched the earth.

Murchakhar is distant 24½ miles from Bedishk, across a level plain, which is shrubless, waterless, and houseless—excepting a water-house, and a small caravanserai.

It is a large mud-built village of about several hundred houses. Opium, cotton, melons, barley, wheat, castor, are grown in the vicinity; it also possesses half-a-dozen small orchards of apricots, plums, and cherries.

A prominent feature of the village is a canaut which runs through the principal street. The plain before it is famous for a battle that was fought between the conqueror Nadir Shah and invading Afghans and Turkomans.

The country between Murchakhar and Gez, as well as that between Gez and Isfahan, is a mere desert, which continues to within six miles of Isfahan, when the face of the country gradually loses its peculiarly arid and worthless appearance.

CHAPTER XX.

Isfahan—The City of Euphemisms—Its Gardens, Groves, and Golden River—The Sun darkened by Locusts—The Palaces, Royal Colleges, and Meidans—The Palace of the Forty Pillars—View of the City from the "Sublime Gate"—The Eighth Paradise—The Thousand Valleys—Rustam's Throne—Hill of the Fire Worshippers—The Rocking Minarets—The Road to America—The Bazaars of Isfahan—Julfa.

ISFAHAN, *June 24th*, 1870.

WHO has not heard of this city of Euphemisms, and of Hajji Baba, of the Figaro of Persia, of Zohrab, and

the Mirza's tales? Lo! Isfahan with its rose gardens, orange and chenar groves, its fields of sweet basil, hyacinths and narcissus, violet, lily, and lotus, city of the nightingale and the lark, the fairest city of Iran, Isfahan with its "residences of felicity," its "Eight Paradises," its "Rose bower of Prosperity," with its hundred minars, rises into view. As we approach the city, it appears buried under leafy shades of many thick groves, as we rather expected, for we were told that the "River of Life," the Zendeh-rûd, ran through the city. But while yet a few miles from it, and we were rejoicing in the deep green around us, a cloud of locusts sailed over us, so deep and wide-spreading, and in such glittering myriads, that they actually obscured the sun—that powerful hot Persian sun—from our view. We stayed to see this mystery of the East pass away. Faster and thicker they advanced. Some divisions sped on their way swiftly. Millions, I should imagine, covered the ground, and crept over the grass, the tufted shrub, and the herbs of the field, destroying, eating up the verdure with a voracity which was appalling. Swiftly and silently, in wave after wave, host after host, they came on towards the west, their transparent wings beating the air like quivering spangles, and forming such a strange sight that we were almost deluded into the idea that all this was a hideous dream. But perceiving that there was no end to this wonderful migration, we roused ourselves and bent our heads towards the saddle and dashed madly on, receiving severe blows in our faces as from a storm

of hailstones. Our horses reared with fright; but after a gallop of ten minutes we had gained the opposite side of the flowing mass, and before us rose once more the graceful view of tree-shaded gardens, green tracts of corn, fields of vegetables, and pleasant suburbs.

Soon we were on the outskirts of the city. Palatial houses loomed into view through the groves, crystal water, patches of whitewash and paint gleamed through the leaves and branches of fruit trees, and at sunset we were entering Isfahan.

The streets of the city are so long and narrow, and the roofed bazaars so ill-lit, that Isfahan appeared to be in darkness, while we knew that the plain outside was still in twilight.

As we galloped by rows of shops we saw figures of men sitting in deep shadows and heard a hum of voices, and now and then shrill shrieks escape from white-robed forms as they rushed aside to avoid our horses.

After a while we emerged upon a spacious avenue, which was darkened by rows of tall trees on either side, and flanked by palaces and gardens, effusing odours of musk and rose. Presently, after crossing a long bridge, we rode through the lanes of Julfa. As we proceeded we heard the nightingale's song, the caw of ravens, chirping of restless birds, sounds of oboe and flute, mingled with human laughter and conversation. But the pleasantest sound heard that night was the deep bass voice of Mr. Holtzer—an

intimate of Bayard Taylor — as he uttered "Bismillah," when we crossed the threshold of his house to enjoy his bounteous and refined hospitality,

It is beyond my powers to do justice to the favoured city of Abbas the Great; for it requires a poet to do that, and more space than I have at my disposal.

"He who has not been to Isfahan has not seen half the world" is the boasted saying of a Persian writer. Yet the writer may have been right, for Isfahan in his days was a most wonderful city. Shah Abbas raised it to its zenith of prosperity until its population almost doubled that of Constantinople, and Baghdad was but a small town in comparison. One writer of that period estimates the inhabitants to number 1,100,000, while the plain around it contained 120 villages; another estimated the population at only 600,000, while another stated it to be about 200,000.

In the 17th century there were 160 Musjids or Mosques, over 80 Madressehs or colleges, and 273 public baths. The palaces were numerous, seven of which belonged to the Shah, and were reported to be of unrivalled splendour, with gardens attached which stretched far and wide, where whosoever entered them might forget that he was within a great city. The Chehar Bâgh, or four gardens, cannot be excelled in any city. These are four mile-long avenues, 100 feet wide, having four lines of chenar or plane trees, with flower-plots extending between the pedestrian and equestrian paths; and stretched along the ave-

nues are the king's lodges, the palaces of the ministers, royal colleges or kiosques.

One can imagine from these what the city may have been once. To comprehend its extent one must needs ascend some high building or one of the mountains on the western side.

From the mountain tops one sees a vast area, so obscured by the foliage of trees and garden shrubberies, that it is difficult to distinguish even the numerous minars, let alone the houses. The best view is from the roof of Ali Kapi Gate.

To understand what Isfahan resembled, when it ranked as the emporium of Asia, we must have read all about Shah Abbas the Second, Shah Sulieman, Shah Sultan Hussein, and Nadir Shah.

The former glory of the city has long ago been extinguished, but the splendour of its numerous palaces, its miles of ruined villages, the many crumbling bridges, its magnificent bazaars, the royal colleges, the minars, the broad avenues, are substantial proofs that at one time Isfahan must have been worthy of being the capital of a warlike and victorious nation.

In company with the British agent at Isfahan, I rode over the bridge of Ali Verdi Khan (so called from a general who built it), which connects Julfa with Isfahan.

The bridge is considerably over a quarter of a mile long, and crosses the Zendeh-rûd or River of Life, or the Golden River. The name is poetical, but if we look at the broad bed of it, utterly dry, save where a

deep depression in the gravel, we see only a series of stagnant pools. To preserve the forest of vegetation which embowers the city, the river has already been distributed into a thousand channels, by which the irrigation is maintained.

From the bridge we emerge into the magnificent Chehar Bâgh. Those who have been to Cairo will remember the Shûbra Road; those who have been to Madrid well know the broad Prado; visitors who have seen Paris cannot forget the Champs Elysée. The Chehar Bâgh is to Isfahan what the Shubra, the Prado, and Champs Elysée are to their respective cities.

The Chehar Bâgh is about 4500 yards long and much superior to the Shûbra Road, and though not quite so trim-looking as the other two, a month's work would render it perfect.

It is a wreck of magnificence, though many a century yet must elapse before the pride of Shah Abbas will lose its beauty. The central road between the double rows of gigantic chenars is in a very dilapidated state, the square blocks used for pavement are in a very bad condition, and equestrians to save their horses' feet ride carelessly over the flower-plots. The Governor of the city receives 1000 tomans annually to keep the King's palaces and gardens in constant repair, but it will be understood what I mean if I suggest that it were well for Isfahan if Nasr-ed-din Shah could summon energy enough to visit it once a year.

We next came to the Madresseh Shahi (the Royal College), which was erected by Shah Sultan Hussein, the last of the Sufi Kings, who reigned from 1694 to 1720, I believe. Its deep and lofty portal of alabaster is carved with cunning art, and well preserved. Two lofty folding doors, very heavy and solidly plated with silver, ornamented with many a varied design, permit ingress within.

In the doorway on either side some Persian shopmen have established themselves for the selling of sweetmeats and fruit and sherbet. Beyond this doorway is a quadrangular square, with a reservoir in the middle surrounded by orange, poplar, and cypress trees. The sides of the square are filled in with rooms of the college, the libraries, and studios, and the musjid of the Madresseh. Every portion of the walls is covered with blue and yellow tiles, one inch square, worked into mosaic, with verses of the Koran specially applicable to the purposes of the establishment. The elegant Mosque is also tiled without and within. As the Mollahs seemed rather impatient at my inspection I prudently retired after a walk around the square.

About a hundred paces further along the southern wall of the Chehar-Bâgh, from the Madresseh, is the entrance, once private, to the Hasht-i-Behesht, or "Eight Paradises," or, as I think it ought to be called, the "Eighth Paradise." We enter a large garden, which is stocked with trees bearing quinces, apricots, oranges, chestnuts, and cherries, and at the meeting-

point of the avenues is the large ornate kiosk designated as the Eighth Paradise.

Directly under the dome, in the middle of the marble floor, is a fountain, around the sides of which are recesses and small retiring rooms.

Forming a second floor above are some galleries, and a secret chamber, about which Morier has woven a delightful tale in his "Mirza."

In this superb retreat, reclining on carpets, he has placed the Lady Sultana of Shah Abbas the Great, whilst in the gallery he has stowed the Prince of Samarcand and the son of the Shah's gardener, who feast their eyes upon the exposed beauties of the "Pearl of the Harem;" and one day while the Princess is being courted by the Prince and her maid by the gardener's son, comes the ferocious aga, who with his scimitar is about to do terrible things, but for the pleasure of executing the lovers in the Meidan Shahi, he defers the murder.

On the walls, amid a variety of florid efforts, are two pictures, one of Fath-Ali-Shah—known by his cataract of a beard—who hunts the maneless lion of Persia, the other of the accomplished attache of a British ambassador, Richard Strachey, whom Persians of all classes (not excepting Fath Ali and his vizier) greatly admired for his personal beauty. He is here represented in a Tyrolean hat with an ostrich feather, and in a court costume of the early part of this century.

From the Sultana's bower we proceed east along an avenue across a desolate enclosure into the garden

of the Palace of Chehel Sittûn, or the Forty Pillars. It is plain that we are on royal grounds by the extravagant extent of the gardens, and the jealous height of the walls which surround them, though the grounds are foul with weeds, and the inexpressible beauty of the garden is marred by neglect.

Having arrived at the farthest end of an extensive reservoir, I am requested to look around and behold the Palace of the Forty Pillars.

We are told in the Arabian Nights how the Sultan stood motionless with astonishment on beholding the wonderful palace of Aladdin. I am inclined to think that I also stood in just the same way when I beheld this palace of Shah Abbas the Great, and the flood of brightness, perfectly dazzling, which it presented.

It is a deep, lofty, and spacious pillared hall, forty feet deep, forty feet high, and sixty feet long, with twenty tall, slender pillars upholding the roof, the whole open to the view. The sun, sky, and reservoir are reflected ten thousand times by the small mirrors which overlie every inch of pillar, roof, and back walls.

There has been considerable taste displayed in the arrangement of the mirrors. Both the pillars, rising from their alabaster pedestals decorated with quadrupled lion heads, as well as the roof, are covered all over with small mirrors forming branches, corollas of flowers, stars, and innumerable Saracenic patterns, and present by their multiplied reflections perpetual streams of brightness.

We may say that it is all very simple. We have but to cover the walls, and roof, and pillars with stucco, lay on the bits of looking-glass in any design we wish, on the moist plaster. Nevertheless, the effect of all this is simply indescribable.

It is called the Palace of the Forty Pillars, yet there are but twenty, the others are in the water of the reservoir, which reflects these pillars, and these make forty. This gorgeous and splendid portico of the Palace has witnessed many a scene of oriental life and many a tragedy.

Morier has added to it a comic picture, where he describes an entertainment which was given to the Mullahs by the great Abbas, that he might detect the soi-disant Mullah who had abducted thedaughter of old Mullah Ahmed, to the great scandal of the pious priests.

The Palace itself is a square building, about 200 feet long by, perhaps, 150 wide. The roof, as seen from the garden, is flat, and spreads out beyond the perpendicular of the walls, into eaves, a yard in depth on all sides. The wings present expanses of floral tracery in many colours. The windows furnish us with specimens of Persian window architecture, which delights in wide arches, and coloured glass cut into a multiplicity of shapes.

Ascending some steps, and reflected in grotesque fashion by the half-million mirrors about us, we enter the Great Hall of Assembly, which is about sixty feet square, and formerly served as a banqueting chamber

when Shah Abbas sat on the throne. The ceiling blazes in gold work, of frets and borders and flowers, surrounding and ramifying through pictorial scenes in green, azure, and vermilion. There are six great pictures on the walls, none of very high order, as may be imagined, any more than the Egyptian pictures in the Theban tombs. The great fault of Persian artists lies in their ignorance of perspective. They are tolerably clever at sketching faces and flowers. One of these pictures represents Shah Tahmasp, called the "Great," and Humaiyun, the Emperor of Hindostan, at a feast, and wanton dancing-girls, and Georgian pages, bearing trays loaded with fruit and wines, and on a flowered carpet before the Shah and his royal guest is a profusion of goblets containing the forbidden wine.

Despite the unskilful hand of the artist, he has been able to throw an air of utter licentiousness on his canvas, and one fancies that the princes around the carpet are in a condition to sing with Horace: "I will —I will be mad to-night."

Opposite this is Shah Ismail, founder of the Sufi dynasty of which Shah Abbas the Great was the fifth monarch, fighting with Abdul Azziz Khan of Turkestan.

This Shah is in the act of cleaving a Turkoman from chin to chine, while mounds of ghastly dead, whose heads his invincible arm has sheared off, lie behind him. The picture gives the idea of great carnage at least, and presents us with portraits of mailed warriors who carried terror into the furthest East.

Another picture represents Shah Ismail fighting with Sultan Selim of Turkey. Each monarch appears to be making his way towards the other with an uplifted sword which has done considerable havoc among the smaller fry of warriors already, as we may gather from the headless dead tumbled into confused heaps behind their horses.

Opposite this is Nadir Shah—conqueror of Delhi—spurring on with heroic vigour and vindictive air against Mohammed Shah, the unfortunate Mogul Emperor.

Close to it is a full length picture of Nasr-ed-din Shah, the present monarch, whom "may God preserve" and make wiser.

Another is a picture of the great Abbas, entertaining Abdul Azziz, ambassador of the Usbegs.

Opposite to it is the effeminate and vicious despot Abbas the Second, presiding over an entertainment to an Indian ambassador, at which there are several wanton Almehs, and effeminate boys employed as cupbearers. The banquet seems to be drawing to a close, and the ruby wine of Shiraz, and the amber wine of Hamadan, and blood-red Isfahan wine is being drunk with extravagant gestures as the grosser dishes are carried away.

The Haft-Dest, or "Seventh Hall" is situated close to the banks of the "Golden River," just below the bridge called Takt-i-Pûllat, or the "Thone of Steel," and is a fit nest for royalty to love and die from satiety.

The "star of auspiciousness and good fortune"—as

the Persians say—led me thither in the early morn, before the sun rose too high to kill all pleasure in the outer world.

We knocked at the outer gate which barred ingress from outside, and a porter with just a shade of surliness on his face opened the door, but after he had opened it wide and perceived who the peremptory knockers were, he became instantly affable.

In fancy he saw his palm adorned with many tiny discs of silver called "krâns," and under a volley of "Salaams and Bismillahs," we were permitted to enter and see the "Elysium."

The Haft-Dest well deserves the name, and is a place of exquisite beauty. The trees, the flowers, the shade, are perfect. There are several winding and shady paths, bordered by violets, lilies, lotus, honeysuckle, hyacinth, and narcissus, and from end to end the shade is delicious; while the nightingales, larks, swallows, and thrushes pour their songs out into the air, which is scented with the perfume of roses and fruit-blossoms.

Desirous to have a view of the city, which was fulfilling bit by bit my dreams of the Orient, from Ali Kapi, or the "Sublime Gate," we travelled along a bank of the Zendeh-rûd River, and over the bridge of Ali Verdi Khan, which spans it, and then through the Chehar Bâgh, and a deserted bazaar, and past ruins after ruins of mighty caravanserais until we came to the Meidan-i-Shahi.

The Shah's square is of the largest class, and is like

a great Spanish plaza. It is 2600 feet long, by 700 feet broad. In the centre of the Meidan is a lofty pole, to the top of which highwaymen and thieves are hauled, and whence they are suddenly dropped down to the ground to be mangled by the great fall, or to be decapitated by the scimitar.

On the postern side is the splendid musjid of Lutf Ali Khan, the colleges for its Mullahs, while the western side is occupied by the Musjid-i-Shahi, "Shah's Mosque," erected by Shah Abbas the Great, the principal and handsomest mosque by far of any in Persia. The Royal Colleges form fit wings to the stately structure. On the south side is the entrance to the bazaars, while opposite it on the north side is the "Sublime Gate," which towers to the altitude of the minar tops, and which in former times served as a kind of lofty throne, wherefrom the Great Abbas might view the scenes enacted in the spacious meidan. It is called a "gate," but a stranger might have aptly called it a palace.

It is four stories, or 100 feet high, by about 60 feet square. The portal itself rises to the height of 40 feet, and is tiled with exquisite taste in mosaic designs, and this may be said to occupy the ground storey of the "gate"; the second is occupied by a magnificent talar, open to all quarters, except the north, where the throne was wont to be placed; behind are the retiring rooms, painted all over in gold and other tints: the third and fourth stories contain a series of habitable chambers, large and small. On gaining the roof,

which contains a turret, and is walled round, we have the best view which may be had of Isfahan.

That which is presented to the eye from the top of Ali Kapi suggests a great city sorrowing its life away.

Below us is the great area of the Royal Meidan, shut in by tall buildings and two-storied arcades, and the musjids of Nagara Khaneh-Imaum-i-Jumah and Shah Abbas, surmounted with its golden crescent. The last is a splendid specimen of Persian mosque architecture. Four Minars spring up to a lofty height, the two nearest us being most magnificent and majestic. The whole is lustrous in turquoise blue, deep azure, yellow and green tiles.

Beyond the Imaum-i-Jumah — "Church of the Chief Mullah"—is the body of the extensive bazaar from which escape the murmur of vivacious trade, and beyond the bazaar the Areg—or "Citadel" called the castle of Tabarak—which is very ancient, and occupies a remarkable place in the history of Isfahan. Within its walls there were 70,000 citizens massacred by that cruel man, Timûr Leng, vulgarly called Tamerlane, It was a very strong place, with massive walls and bastions, and a deep wide ditch, and contained the royal palace, the treasury, and records of the ancient Imaum. Its ruins are vast, and have remained untouched ever since the Afghan invasion, which occurred at the beginning of the 18th century, and struck the vital blow at the splendour of Isfahan.

Around it is a sea of domes, and roofs of baths, and musjids, and slender minars, filled in and intersected

by dark bands of foliage, and lines of shrubbery stretching south as far as the eye can see.

Immediately to the north are the palaces and their extensive gardens, Chehel Sittûn, with its lustrous pillars twinkling brilliantly behind the foliage, one or two of which appear like lances of crystal—then to the right—the winter palace built by Mohammed Hussein Khan for his master Fath Ali Shah, which he furnished so completely that there was nothing left to be desired for the use of the king and his women. An oblong court is before it, containing a tranquil stretch of water which from the vegetation reflected therein seems green. A passage leads from the court to a harem whose entrance is obscured by a large curtain of white cloth decorated by crimson flowers. The harem was the scene of the murder of Shah Sultan Hussein, founder of the Royal College, by Ashraf the Afghan usurper. White walls, with arcades decorated with painted nosegays, separate these palaces one from the other. To the left is the "Eighth Paradise," or the ornate kiosk, half buried by the foliage of its garden, and beyond looms the stately Royal College, with its two spiring minars. To the north is a most pleasant view of the haunts of royalty and the bowers of love and pleasure, and beyond these extend streams of verdure, which finally as the details fade with distance appear to become merged in an extensive and tranquil forest, extending apparently to the Atesh Kûh, or "Hill of the Fire Worshipper."

East, our eyes overlook another verdurous scene which embraces the chenar colonnades of the Chehar Bâgh, the shady banks of the "River of Life," the thriving Armenian suburb of Julfa. The extensive domain known as the Negar Jereb, or the "Thousand Acres," and the dim extent of the "Thousand Valleys."

The ridge called Sufi's Hill runs parallel with the Zendeh-rûd about five miles from its banks. At its northern extremity is the strange limestone rock formation called the "Throne of Rustam."

As the summit of the rocky ridge happens to be of much harder material than the slope, the sides have been undermined by rains and snows until now the summit overhangs the slope on almost all sides, like the cornice of a huge temple wall, and presents the appearance of a gigantic altar.

I climbed up the western side, and passed some caves and rock-cut tanks, which I presume are vestiges of either protesting Muslims or fire-worshippers. On arriving upon the summit of the "Throne" the "Thousand Valleys" and the whole plain of Isfahan lay clearly mapped before me. The plain covers an immense area, and is dotted with bleak, barren hills which stand isolated or in serrated ridges, some of which rise to the dignity of mountains, others are mere dark and billowy waves of rocks, and between these wind and ramify the valleys, each of which is susceptible of high cultivation. Hence the term "Thousand Valleys."

While I enjoyed the view, I amused myself

by questioning my interpreter respecting Takt-i-Rustam.

"What place is this, Alias?"

"Rustim's chair, or sofa, not Rustim's Throne."

"And who was Rustim?" I asked, though I knew very well, having read that wonderful production "Shah Nameh" by Ferdusi.

"Rustim was one strong man, sir, stronger than a lion, much stronger than an elephant; he was stronger than a thousand living Persians!"

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir, he could tear up big mountains and throw them at his enemies. He had a sword—a dreadful long sword—and with that he would cut a thousand men down at one blow!"

"He must have been a very strong and big man, eh? And this hill was the place on which he lived, I suppose?

"Yes, sir."

"But don't you think, Alias, that it is rather small for such a man as Rustim—if he was so big as you describe him?"

"I don't know, sir."

"And I suppose this smooth rock was his dining-table, and where, if he was a good Mussulman, he must have spread his carpet and prayed often, eh?"

"I am sure he must have been a good Mussulman, sir. Yes, sir, this is the place where he prayed before going to fight, and in the morning and evening; and just below here is the place where he got his water to

drink and wash. Allah blew on the rock and it split, and from the crack there came water, which you may see now."

And we descended a few feet, and saw the crack and the water which pious Alias believed implicitly was caused by the breath of Allah.

Another legend about the rock is that "Balki, Queen of Sheba, being very ill with a strange disease, was sent to Isfahan to be cured, as the only district then known where the climate was uniform, and that Solomon built her a house here that she might enjoy the purest breezes."

The Queen of Sheba, it seems, is a great character in the East. The Abyssinians claim her also as of their country.

From Takht-i-Rustam we rode north-east about three miles to the Atesh Kûh, or the "Hill of the Fire Worshippers," and here again my scepticism clashed with the traditions of the natives.

Scores of generations appear to have quarried it on its southern and western sides. But the wonder is whither all the mass of stone taken from the immense quarry has been taken to.

We ascended up its eastern face to the summit. At three-fourths of the ascent we passed through a gap in the wall fifteen feet thick, built of large adobe bricks, each brick being about fourteen inches square by about six in thickness, and between each brick were layers of straw.

The hill is about 300 yards in length, by about 150

in breadth, and rises above the plain between 250 and 300 feet, the circumference at the base being about a mile. On the west and south-west it is perpendicular and very rugged. On the north and east and south-east the hill affords sufficient slope for an ascent, but on these sides the hill is defended by those stupendous walls and towers which are twenty, thirty, and even fifty feet high, according to the slope. At the top, the walls are certainly ten feet thick, while at the base they are from fifteen to twenty feet, and are built as I said before of sun-dried bricks, one of which would suffice for a man's load. The Zendeh-rûd passes west of the hill towards Isfahan. It is assumed that the fortress was built as a defence against an attack from the north-west. Of course the hill is rightly named "Hill of the Fire Worshippers," for the people in the days when it was built were all Zoroastrians.

Sir Robert Ker Porter calls Atesh Kûh an artificial mount. The Rocky Mountains of America are just as artificial. Ousely speaks of it as a "mountain of five or six miles distant from Isfahan," on which are some remains of an edifice, not very ancient, but occupying, as tradition relates, the site of a ruined "Fire Temple." Evidently Ousely did not see it, otherwise he had not called the hill a "mountain."

Morier calls it "a triangular hill, the Atesh Gal, or the Place of Fire," and says that it is composed of several strata of rock, and that its best ascent is by a path to the eastward.

He writes, "Upon the summit are some old buildings,

composed of mud-brick, baked in the sun, but of a very large size, between which are layers of reeds alone, without any apparent cement. The Persians say that these buildings were the works of the Guebers." Mr. Morier has been on the top, evidently. He is right when he says that there are some ruins of mud buildings on its summit, also when he says the best ascent is by the eastward. I doubt his accuracy in calling it "triangular"; but it may be that the straw I saw are "reeds."

He does not mention the strong walls, which mark the hill as being a fort, the only feature of it, in my opinion, which causes it to deserve celebrity.

On the highest portion of the hill is an octangular building once covered by a cupola which is pierced by eight doorways, whence a splendid view of Isfahan and its surrounding plains and hills may be obtained.

There is another object of curiosity mentioned by almost every traveller, about two miles from Atesh Kûh. This is an insignificant musjid or mosque, to which is attached "two rocking minarets."

We dismounted at the gate. The front of the mosque was open in one wide arch, and the structure was roofed with a brick dome. On the wall were hung an infinite number of relics, or offerings, consisting of bits of rags, or cuttings of carpets, rams' tails, and other miscellanea.

After examining the interior, we ascended by a staircase one of the two stunted towers which flanked the musjid and rose above the dome about twelve

feet. Two of the four youths who clung to the skirts of the mullahs in charge then ascended the minars, one up each minar, and having arrived at the top, we saw them sway their bodies backwards and forwards, which caused the slight shells of brick in which they were to shake also. This explains the shaking of the minarets sufficiently; but I will give a few more details, which will quite explain the "mystery."

The walls of the brick minars, which are about three feet square, are but one brick in thickness, so that they are mere shells.

A narrow staircase within affords space for the passage of a gaunt-bodied Persian to ascend to the top to chant his warning of the prayer hour. They are built from the roof of the Musjid on two ill-shaped scantlings placed transversely which jut out from the wall two or three feet, while an abundance of mud mortar is laid over them between each brick.

They are thus so frail that it is easy for a man swaying his body to and fro not only to make them vibrate, but to topple quite over. Nevertheless, the mullahs endeavour to make travellers believe that the minars are rocked because the soul of a saint has become restless.

Takht-i-Pûlat lies on the western bank of the Zendeh-rûd, and is a wilderness of monuments to the dead, covering about two square miles. The cemetery is very much neglected, and is a favourite ground for stray animals, while numberless caravans have obliterated by their tracks hundreds of graves.

Here lies the famous Dervish Babarrûk, under a conspicuous dome lacquered as usual and surrounded by hundreds of dead disciples; and not far off is Mullah Hussein's tomb, surrounded by a wide circle of tombs.

Inscriptions upon each stone tell what characters lie beneath, and the age, life, and virtues of the defunct, with a select verse from the Koran above. But the poor unknown lie interred by thousands, themselves, their memories, and graves sunk into oblivion.

North of the Persian Cemetery is the Armenian graveyard half-a-mile square in extent. There are no mausoleums here, but oblong masses of stone which rest on the graves.

Several Russians, Germans, French, and two or three English lie buried with the Armenians.

West of the cemetery and half-way up the Sufi's Hill, is seen a ruined house, which was occupied by a persecuted band of Sufis. There is nothing remarkable about the ruin except the sad story connected with it, which I have no space to relate. The whole place is covered with caligraphic inscriptions by persons of many nations, especially by Englishmen.

About a mile north of this ruin is a very old well, to which is attached the legend that the road to *Ankee Donia*, or America, lies through its black depths.

The bazaars of Isfahan are even larger than those of Teheran, but the half of them are empty.

There is a little of everything displayed in the

bazaars, and each trade has its own lane—in one you hear tremendous din of hammering on brass and copper as a thousand hammers beat the metal into pots and kettles and braziers, jugs and pitchers, trays and dishes. Next to it are the shoe and sandal makers. In the next are manufactured the swords and scimitars, and murderous-looking kummars. In the next are the weavers, carpet makers and saddle makers, who employ a great deal of carpet stuff in coverings for the cumbrous Persian saddles. From a short bazaar lane to my right, is heard a universal ringing of hammers upon anvils, as the befrocked workmen lay on to some tune, while red-hot sparks fly like a shower of meteors as they form the iron shoes, nails, rods, locks, hinges and latches; and on striking off to the left the aroma from hundreds of spices set me coughing and sneezing violently. Here were dates from Bushire, raisins from Kasvin and Kashan, rice from Resht and Mazanderan. Wine in glass flasks from Hamadan, Teheran, Kasvin and Shiraz, not forgetting the wine of Isfahan, which is excellent, innumerable spices of all colours and all sorts in linen bags and bowls and boxes. But it would be tedious to proceed further; he who reads the Arabian Nights Entertainments, and instead of Baghdad reads Isfahan will know what may be seen in the bazaar of the old Persian capital.

In the Isfahan bazaar one may even see Aladdin himself preceded by his handsome pages, and surrounded by his servants, all mounted on superb horses, with gold and silver caparisons. The Calenders are

telling their stories over again, but this time not before Zobeide, but to a highly amused crowd, and to which the Governor, who is the very picture of Jiafar, has clearly a great mind to listen, but he denies himself as he thinks it would spoil his dignity.

And there is Alnaschar on his bundles near his crockery, dreaming no doubt of what he will do when he gets rich, though he does not repeat the wretched catastrophe which ruined him quite. As for princes of Persia deep in love, they are all about me, and are passing by the whole time. As to Hadji Baba—Why there is the caravanserai, and close to it is the old barber, Hadji's father, busy at his old trade of shaving heads, and the graceless son is laughing at his beard, putting the old fellow into a mischievous mood.

One word more, and I shall close this letter. I mentioned Julfa, the Armenian suburb of Isfahan. It was the conqueror Shah Abbas the Great who imported this colony of Armenians, and planted it on the other side of the Zendeh-rûd, so that the river should run between the devout sheeahs and the Christians. Some 5000 families of them came from Julfa on the Araxes in the Southern Caucasus. They were treated kindly by the Great Shah, who knew their worth as traders and mechanics, and during his reign they prospered.

They were permitted to build churches and practise their own religion, and they were allowed the same legal privileges as the Muslim of his capital. But the day came when Mohammed the cruel Afghan with

drawn sword entered Julfa, and Isfahan, and then there was slaughter, rapine, and spoliation. Though ultimately Persian princes were restored to power the prospects of the Armenians have never improved. For no prince possessed the wisdom and unselfishness of Shah Abbas, and none cared to sacrifice his love of gold for the welfare of his most promising subjects, and every succeeding Shah has excelled his predecessor in misgovernment.

The Armenians are now reduced to 600 families, while Isfahan has not over 70,000 Mohammedans.

Julfa has five churches and a cathedral, and rather an excess of priests. I went to see the cathedral, and for Julfa it is a very superior building. It contains a number of large and small pictures, but nothing of a high order. A multitude of large-eyed and long-haired saints look out from the canvas with aureoles round their heads. The atmosphere is redolent of incense. The roof is said to be sheeted with gold, and the mystery of the redemption by the Holy One of Israel is everywhere set forth in paint and gilt.

In the court of the church is buried the traveller Claudius James Rich, who died at Shiraz in 1821, and was removed to his present resting-place in 1826. There are nine other English graves there.

While looking about the court I was invited to go up and see the prelate who is the head of the Armenians in Persia and India. His palace is a new, handsome and spacious building, and stands behind the cathedral. I found him on the lofty roof which

overlooks a magnificent scene, a tall, stalwart, majestic old man, most benevolent and venerable in appearance. My heart went immediately towards the patriarch, who seemed like a very Abraham, but when I heard him call for wine and arrack and saw him drink it my reverence vanished.

We sat on the house-top until sunset, looking at the glorious prospect, until the strong broad light over the plain, and ocean of verdure and foliage waned, the peaks of Sufi Hill, Atesh Kûh, and Rustam's Throne, flushing with orange and purple, then paling and gloaming in the fast receding sunlight. Then we rose to go, and as we turned to bid the Archbishop a "Good evening," the Moslem Muezzin across the river burst out triumphantly "La Allah, il Allah, Mohammed resoul Allah!"

CHAPTER XXI.

Farewell to Isfahan—The Bust of Hercules—The Grotesque Town of Yezdekhast—The Ruins of Pasargadae—The Tomb of Cyrus.

SHIRAZ, *July 5th*, 1870.

I TURNED to take a last view of Isfahan from the grey grassy ridge which separates it from its offshoot Isfahanek, which lies on the road as we proceed to Shiraz, and believe that it will long remain on my mind connected with a profoundly blue sky, clear air,

dusky groves, gorgeous temples of pleasure, lofty minars and egg-shaped domes. My wishes are that Isfahan may never be worse than it is, and that its palaces may long commemorate the lofty-minded and great Shah Abbas, and that the Zendeh-rûd, or "River of Life" rightly called, may flow faster, flow stronger, for the city has fulfilled my dream of the Orient, though it is but a shadow of its former self.

As we leave the Isfahan plain some of the hills near Takht-i-Rustam assume an extraordinary resemblance to a gigantic bust of Hercules. His ruffled crop of hair, the broad massive head, a very precipice of a forehead, a nose for a fitting buttress to the brow, the whole bust comes out by-and-by into a close resemblance. But as we move on the Hercules becomes a lion couchant, the Lion of Judah, with his head between his outstretched paws. In a moment it has changed again, it changed as we travelled on half-a-dozen times; the last view of it from the angle of Sufi Hill suggested a dragon.

We passed pleasant Mayar, shut in by its rugged wall of mountains, at a vehement pace, and long before night arrived at Kûmishah, which is situate on a doleful plain circumscribed within narrow limits by brick-coloured mountains, almost insolated by 128° Fahr. of heat. I invited myself to pass the night in the comfortable rooms of the telegraph station, for there was nobody at home.

When evening came I had my bed made on the house-top, whence I had a good view of the town and

of the myriad of mud towers, pigeons whose dung is more precious than guano, of acres of tomb-stones, and lion sphynxes. Near the town of Kûmishah is the 12th century tomb of Shah Riza, in the midst of a grove of poplar and elm. In its courtyard are two tanks in which are sacred fish.

"Allah-ho-Akbar, Allah, ho, ho, Akbar," shouted by a multitude of shrill-voiced boys, responsive to the deep bass of men, is a cry I hear as I drop to sleep with the clear heaven for my canopy.

The next morning I resume my rapid travel, until I am halted at Yezdikhast, only ten farsakhs from Kûmishah, until a fresh relay of horses comes from Maksûd Bêgi, the intervening station.

Yezdikhast marks the divisional line between Iran and Fars, or Media and Persia.

When the strange town is first seen, its houses appear like a cluster of ant hills. Approaching nearer one sees a large grave-yard containing many tombs four, five, six hundred years old, a sphynx or two over some graves, and a cupolaed tomb covering a saint. After passing the cemetery, Yezdikhast becomes fully visible in all its perfection of grotesqueness. It stands on a cliffy, flat-topped, anvil-shaped hill, in the middle of a wide river-bed, which is cultivated. The hill is probably 1000 feet long by 200 feet wide and about 100 feet high above the river-bed. The sides of the hill are nearly perpendicular. A light draw-bridge on the western side is the only means of communication with it.

The rock of Yezdikhast, with the brown mud houses perched on its level summit, is in itself strange, but not the most extraordinary feature of the place to my mind. There are about 300 houses on it, which stand with their backs facing outward, their airy latrines overhanging the cliff, while the fronts form the two sides of the single street which runs from the drawbridge to the other end of the town.

Yezdikhast is famous for its good bread, which is a wonder considering some things which arrest the stranger's attention when it is approached.

Fortunately we were not compelled to stop long in its ill-smelling neighbourhood, for the relay came up and we mounted. Our road was south-eastward through Fars—the Bakhtiari Mountains to our right, the great desert and the way to "Yezd's Eternal Mansion of the Fire"

"Where aged saints in dreams of heaven expire!"

on our left. The desolate plains to the left are the home of the wild ass and hyaena, and in the mountains on our right are panthers, and lynx or caracal, a specimen of which latter I saw. It was a most beautiful animal, with soft fawn-coloured fur, and finely pencilled ears, the very picture of alertness and cunning.

Half-way to Shûlgistan, the next station, we saw a tree on the slope of one of the hills to our right. I mention this fact as it was surrounded by a fence and because a tree in the open is so rare in Persia, that

when it is found it is immediately enclosed, lest harm should come to it.

The next morning we left Meshed-i-Murghab for the ruins of Pasargadae which lay south about five miles. The road ran through a richly cultivated plain watered by the fine stream of Murghab, and its numerous canauts.

Inclining a little towards the right we came to a group of low and greyish hills, on the most southward of which we caught a glimpse of a whitish stone wall. Riding up to it we found it to be a marble platform, or rather a marble wall which encased the hill; we followed (without dismounting) the base of the hill until we had gone all round it.

Using the tape line to measure the platform, the west side was discovered to be 260 feet long, the north side 192, while the south side was 300. The walls were several feet in thickness.

The natives call it "Takt-i-Suliman," or Solomon's Throne, and on it once stood the "Castle of Pasargadae," and the dwellings of the Magi and the Altar of the Sacred Fire. To commemorate the overthrow of the Babylonian Empire, Cyrus the Great, in the year 557 B.C., caused to be erected on it a fort or castle containing a holy place, whither he went to worship, and where his successors were wont to be inaugurated as Kings of Persia.

The marble structure, glistening like snow, crowning such a noble platform, with the city of Pasargadae stretched at its feet, must have been a splendid sight.

After proceeding south-west for a quarter of a mile, we came to a small square building whose smooth-faced stones appear to be of the same kind as that used in the castle platform. It measures 9 feet each face, and is about 45 feet high. In its northern side there appear traces of a square embrasure which may have been a door, and a bit of a cornice is still left on the summit of one of the walls.

Going four or five hundred yards further over cultivated ground, we came to a hollowed column which resembles several sarcophagi standing on end, one above the other.

Three sides of the column are smooth, the fourth is deeply troughed. I crept into the lower, and the sides overlapped my body several inches. On the north side of the column are some cuneiform characters.

Further south a few yards is an artificial platform, on which are three more of these hollow marble blocks on end, and the remains of a great hall, which measures 136 feet long by 86 feet wide. Ten column bases of dark blue stone still exist with portions of basso-relievo sculptures on them. On one side of the hall there are three entrances, the principal one being 7 feet wide, the two smaller ones being but 4 feet 9 inches wide. The door jambs are square monolithic columns of dark blue slate-stone. In the centre of the hall is a grand column of white marble perfectly smooth and round consisting of four pieces, and probably 50 feet in height. A fifth piece of it lies on the ground close by, and is used by the women of the

Eeliaut tribe to grind corn in. Its circumference is 10 feet 6 inches.

Attracted by the sight of a remnant of a pillar, or a monolith plainly visible above the surface of the fields, distant about 500 yards to the east, I came to another well-defined hall. This measures 86 feet long by 45 feet wide in its interior. Eight column bases still remain, seven of which are of slate-stone, the other is of a fine and hard grey sandstone. Two pylons or portals, 10 feet 5 inches wide and 18 feet deep, still stand and are most beautiful.

Outside of the hall is one of those hollow columns already mentioned, and it bears a cuneiform inscription.

Below the inscription is the figure of a man, with four wings spread out from each shoulder, the tips of two rising several inches higher than the head, the other two within the former two, spreading outwardly along the sides and legs of the figure. He has his hands raised as if in the act of praying. On the head above a close skull cap rosetted over the ears are two wide-spreading horns, and above the horns is the head-dress similar to Athor's of Egypt.

Near a village a little west of this ruin we come to what may be considered the most important relic extant in Pasargadae.

The natives call it "Mader-i-Suliman" (Mother of Solomon). It is a small building with a low gabled marble roofiet surmounting a truncated pyramid. At the lowest tier I find it is 45 feet long by 42 feet wide,

with seven layers of marble blocks, each layer receding somewhat from the other—the pyramid rising to the total height of 18 feet. The small building on the summit measures exteriorly 20 feet 6 inches, by 17 feet 2 inches in width, the interior is 17 feet high, 10 feet 6 inches long, by 7½ feet wide, the entrance is by a door 4 feet high by 2 feet 9 inches in width. Five layers of blocks make the total height of this singular edifice. The first layer is composed of two massive blocks, between which is the entrance, the second layer has three blocks, the central one of which serves for a lintel for the entrance, the third is of two shallower blocks like thick slabs, the fourth forms a quadruple cornice—the fifth is above the cornice and supports the solid and sloping roof. The casing-stone of the pyramid and tomb is of pure white marble. In the interior is a Koran, and across a corner are two strings to which are suspended tins and copper funnels contributed by pious Muslims who when ill vowed to make an offering to Bathsheba, and complied with their vows when they recovered.

Three sides and the roof is much blackened with smoke, while the fourth side facing the doorway, is still nearly white. The floor is formed of two immense and thick slabs over 18 inches in thickness, and a cavity nearly in the middle of the floor indicated where the spoiler has been at work to rob the iron clamps to which probably the coffin was bound.

Around the pyramid at the distance of several feet

from its base, forming a quadrangle, are 28 portions of circular columns, set in a mud wall some 5 or 6 feet high, thus forming a thorough enclosure. Within the quadrangle are the graves of Muslims who lived in the village which is but a few feet outside the enclosure, and who thought that by being buried close to Bathsheba's tomb they had a better chance of heaven. There is no inscription except one in Arabic, amongst a florid fretwork which declares the tomb to be that of "Mader-i-Suliman."

So much for the description of what may be seen at present on the site of the city of Pasargadae.

Arrian says:—"The tomb of Cyrus was in the royal Paradise of Pasargadae, round which was a grove of various trees. It was well supplied with water, and the fields were covered with high grass. The tomb below was of a quadrangular shape built of free-stone; above was a house of stone, with a roof. The door that leads to it is so very narrow that a man not very tall can get in with difficulty.

"Within is the golden coffin of Cyrus, near which is a seat with feet of gold, the whole is hung round with coverings of purple and carpets of Babylon. In the vicinity was built a small house for the Magi, to whose care the tomb had originally been entrusted, and so continued since the days of Cambyses from fathers to sons."

Arrian also relates that there was an inscription on the tomb which ran thus:—

"Oh mortals I am Cyrus, son of Cambyses, founder

of the Persian Monarchy and sovereign of Asia, grudge me not therefore this monument."

On the third morning after my arrival in Pasargadae, I determined to take the longest road to Persepolis, which is about nine miles further than by the eastern road through the Pasargadae plain, as the ravine which opens to the south-west of Cyrus' tomb appeared so like to that which leads to the tombs of the kings, behind the Theban suburb of Kurneh, that I thought something of interest might be seen there.

A branch of the river Polvar—the ancient *Medus* (dry now)—issues from this ravine in the spring. Following its left bank we entered the pass, and after travelling about half-a-mile were soon involved in its intricate windings, with the dark upright mountains full of manifold fissures, and cavernous perforations and immense bouldery crags impending on the edge of pointed ledges, all around us. A little further on we came to a winding gallery which was cut out of the perpendicular face of a basaltic cliff, and beyond the gallery on either side of the deep pass was the quarry of Pasargadae.

The gallery is about 1200 feet long and about 5 feet wide. From the saddle, as we rode through the gallery, we might easily look over the solid wall of rock which has been left to protect passengers from the danger of the precipice below. As we advanced the quarries became more extensive, the ravine at intervals expanded into pretty valleys overgrown

with wild almond trees and acacias. About five miles from the gallery we were aware of a stream rushing over the bottom of the ravine, which gradually became quite a river.

About three farsakhs from Pasargadae, the quarries extending at intervals all along the ravine, we came for the first time to a dark slate quarry.

Three farsakhs further on we came to the valley of Kawamabad.

Thence we shortly after turned east through another wild scene of mountain passes with vestiges here and there showing that marble has been extracted from some of the hills in ancient times.

At Saidan we determined to halt for the night, as the vale in which it is situated leads to Persepolis and Istakhr, and is only five miles distant from the ruins.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Ruins of Istakhr the Fortress—Persepolis and its Palace—Exploration Underground—The Plain of Mervdasht.

SHIRAZ, *July 6th*, 1870.

THE next morning I returned twelve miles along the eastern road towards Pasargadae to examine the quarries of white marble, whence the material for the splendid edifices of Persepolis was obtained. Square cut blocks roughly trimmed lay about in profusion.

Coming back towards Daidûn, we halted at Hadjiabad for a few minutes, and in the course of conversation we obtained information to the effect that in the face of the marble mountain which bounded the valley of Hadjiabad and Saidan was a cave and some "writing on the stone," as my interpreter told me. As the mountain was but 1500 yards from the village I rode to the cave which I perceived to be natural, but artificially enlarged. On our right as we entered the wall of the cave were several tablets chiselled out of the stone, but two only had inscriptions which were in (what is termed) Pahlawan.

The valley, which is about two miles wide and about eight in length, is a very pretty one, well watered and bounded by mountains which rise above it to 800 and 1000 feet. The Kur-Aub (Cyrus Stream) with its numerous canauts fully suffice for the irrigation of the valley. It possesses several villages, which are half hidden by orchards of fruit trees. After changing our horses at Saidan we followed the whitish road which crossed the valley towards its southern boundary of mountains. Presently the valley narrowed to a gorge. About half-a-mile from the narrowest point of the gorge I saw a lotus capital half buried in the loamy soil.

A few hundred yards further on to our left we passed up a narrow ravine dividing two lofty hills, where we saw several tombs about two feet square cut in the face of the upright rock wall.

Retracing our steps we proceeded up towards the

centre of the gorge where, having arrived, we found it occupied by several mounds, some upwards of 50 feet in height, and lenghty embankments of almost equal height, and ruins of a pillared edifice and a fort. This is Istakhr. Leading from the ravine towards the fort I traced an ancient aqueduct which seemed to have been carried into the Persepolitan valley.

Halting at the gate of Istakhr we were told that the broad plain to the west was the plain of Persepolis and that the valley to the east was the valley of Saidan.

Three monolithic jambs standing upright are what remain of what was once a monster double pylon. It is 50 feet in depth, the stones of which are so Cyclopean in size that one is immediately reminded of the great stones of Egypt and the temple stones of Jerusalem. One of these blocks, which flanked the open portal, measured 17 feet 2 inches in length by 4 feet in height, the largest measured 21 feet 4 inches in length and 6 feet in height. The breadth of the portal is about 20 feet.

Proceeding north-westwardly fifty paces after climbing what seemed to be a terrace slope, I came to the remains of a very large edifice which, as near as I could make out, stood within a great square, whose sides measured 74 paces.

Within it stands a column with a capital representing the two fore-halves of two reclining bulls united, the hinder part of each half to the other, the heads fronting opposite ways, the necks arched,

leaving the back a square depression about eight inches wide, whereon a large wooden rafter or the base of an architrave might rest.

The heads are adorned with the representations of a bridle and their crests and hollow backs with a sculptured cloth studded, their throats seem to have a broad chain band, and over their necks there is the shape of a wide and rosetted collar. One peculiarity in this double-headed bull statue is that there are neither ears nor horns to either of the heads. The column, 20 feet 6 inches in height, has the Doric groove, but though as deep it is not quite so wide as in the Doric. There are visible eight bases of columns, and prostrate on the ground near them I counted twenty-six pieces of columns consisting of bull-headed capitals, and portions of the circular and fluted shaft, some of which are 20 inches in diameter.

Close to the upright column are several massive slabs standing on their ends which, according to their arrangement, appear to be the remains of two cells. One of these slabs measures 11 feet 2 inches in height by 7 feet 2 inches in breadth and 10 inches in thickness. Outside of the square are earth mounds and fragments of white and grey marble and slate stone. Judicious excavations would reveal much of Istakhr which would perhaps determine a great many doubtful questions respecting Istakhr and Persepolis. As we study the site and its surroundings we become certain that the position of this fortress commands an entrance to the plain of Persepolis. It must have

been a populous place we may rest assured from the many ruins in the gorge and from corroborative evidence we have in the worn aspect of the ruins around. Many thousands of feet have trodden those rocks, for they have that same smooth aspect which we may see on the stony face of Olivet, or on the surface of the Athenian Pnyx, or on the rocky slopes of any Acropolis in the near neighbourhood of an ancient city.

On crossing the Kur-Aub (which flows through the gorge of Istakhr to the Bundamir River) we came, after travelling a couple of miles, to a bend in the northern mountains which we had seen from Istakhr. In the southern face of the mountain are four lofty and broad excavations somewhat in the shape of a cross and are 115 feet high. The four tombs, which I suppose them to be, occupy a length of 200 paces on the face of a perpendicular cliff of marble. Facing the first tomb, at a distance of about 60 feet from it, is a small square platformed edifice, which is 24 feet by 22 square and 35 feet in height.

The sculpture on the lowest part of the first tomb represents a crowned personage mounted, who has his spear through the throat of a helmeted horseman. On the lowest part of the second tomb there is a representation of a crowned figure on horseback holding the arms of a youth, while a short-bearded man has fallen on one knee as if in the act of imploring for mercy. There is a long inscription above them. The third sculpture is very much defaced,

though in a large and bold style two crowned heads holding a standard could be seen. The sculpture under the fourth tomb represents a long-haired and short-whiskered king with a low crown surmounted by a puffed cap, holding a wreath with pendent ends of ribbons on each side of it ; and opposite to the king is a crowned queen with long ringlets, open bodice fastened at the top with a brooch, zoned by a band which is tied into a knot similar to modern neckties. The queen's crown is like a card basket filled with rosettes or flower buds. Between the king and queen is a boy, standing directly under the wreath. From the sculpture, the king and queen appear to be about to crown their son with a wreath for some courageous action.

There is a fifth sculpture between the fourth and the third tombs, on a chiselled tablet in the rock, which is 65 feet wide and 30 feet high.

The transverse or central portion of each of the cross-like excavations contains the entrance to the tomb, which recedes several feet from the perpendicular of the lowest portion, leaving a space like a railless veranda in front, which was probably left for those on whom devolved the duty of burying the kings to draw up the body, where also a certain ceremony might be performed over it by the priests of the Magi, before the assembled multitude who came to pay their last respects to their king.

The face of this transverse portion, 40 feet high, represents the front of a temple or palace. Four pilasters

capitaled with the double-headed bull, each head with a single horn, support an architrave which rests on three square blocks fitted into the hollow between the bulls' necks.

The architrave is decorated. The four pilasters are equidistant from each other, and from the extremities of the excavation. Between the two central pilasters, and occupying two-thirds of the space between them, is the door of the tomb surmounted by a lintel and projecting cornice.

The shape of the panelled door is perfect, but the bottom of the door to a height of four feet and a half is cut through, by which an entrance is effected into the tomb.

Of all the tombs that I have seen in any part of the world the only one to compare with these in design is the great tomb at Beni-Hassan in Egypt.

Above the transverse section of the excavations, which in each represents the front of a Persian temple or palace, is the third or upper section of the lofty façade.

On this is sculptured a lofty catafalque. The front is divided into two tiers, in each of which are sculptured fourteen Atlantes dressed in tunics reaching to the knees, bound round the waist by a sash with drooping ends, to some of which are suspended broad short daggers ; the Atlantes support the tiers by the palms of their hands, which are raised to the length of their arms above their heads. Each tier is divided by an elegantly cut cornice ; the lower

one is decorated with designs which would represent in Roman figures 111811181118.

The ends of the catafalque are finished off with the standing figure of a one-horned lion fronting opposite ways.

Above the catafalque is the figure of a priest moulded on a small platform of three steps. Before the priest, whose face is turned towards it, is an altar likewise raised on a platform of three steps, and upon the altar burns the holy flame. The right hand of the priest, who is clad in officiating robes, is raised as if in the act of incantation towards the flame ; his left holds a bow by the end. To the right of the fire and above it is a sculptured representation of the sun from which the sacred flame given to Zoroaster was originally kindled. Between the high priest and the altar—soaring above in space, with his face turned towards the priest, his right hand held as if in the act of blessing, his left holding a circlet like a cestus—is the divine Ahuro-mazdao, or as the word is rendered in English Hormazd, the Jupiter of the heavens, the sole and creating God, Lord of the sun, the elemental five—fire, wind, earth, ether, water—chief of the angels, the highly endowed, the exalted, the merciful one. Hormazd is represented with a round and upright cap as a head cover, and with a full beard and long hair curling over the shoulders, and dressed in a robe with his lower half shrouded by wings. On the left side of the catafalque are three spearmen one above the other ; they are clad in long robes, and have long hair which

floats over their shoulders, and for a head-dress they have round caps.

On the right are three more rows of two figures each, similar to the others, but instead of holding spears in their hands they have handkerchiefs, which they hold as if about to wipe their tears.

After making the above copious notes, which description will apply to all these tombs right on the spot, I endeavoured to muster courage to climb up the steep face of the excavation to inspect the tomb, which, as I mentioned, was 35 feet above the ground.

I succeeded twice in getting within 8 feet of the platform, but finally had to give it up as an impossibility for me, and was compelled to send a soldier to the Eeliaut camp, distant a mile off, for a rope. The semi-barbarian having brought it, climbed up to the platform before the tomb; and having sent another man up to assist him in holding the rope, I managed after tremendous exertion to reach it also. I may here state what occurred 2300 years ago on the same spot.

Darius had commanded that a tomb should be excavated for himself in this mountain of marble, and when it was finished he had expressed a desire to go and examine it, but the Magi dissuaded him from his purpose by predicting that terrible misfortune would occur if he went; but some of his retinue were not to be intimidated, and while they were being drawn up by a rope the latter broke, and they were precipitated on the rocks below, through a fright which the workmen received by seeing several serpents above them.

On entering the tomb, which is black with smoke, much more so than the so-called "Fire Temple" below, and which is another proof that it should not be called a fire temple, we see three arched alcoves extending the whole length of the tomb. The length of the tomb is about 35 feet; between the walls of the tomb, which are 2 feet thick of solid rock, and the wall through which the alcoves are cut, is a breadth of 5 feet. From the top of the arch to the floor of the alcove is 9 feet. In the floor of each alcove is sunk a vault, 4 feet 4 inches deep by 8 feet 3 inches long and 5 in width. A stone covers each vault, and as the cover has been displaced and not put quite back in its place, we are able to see with the aid of a torch into the depth of each vault.

There are several other relics of antiquity near to the tombs of Naksh-i-Rustam, consisting of sculptures, a slender monument of no great height, and a couple of altars, besides several hundred lines of inscriptions under one of the tombs, which is the one believed to be the tomb of Darius.

From Naksh-i-Rustam we proceed south to Persepolis across the gorge (in the narrowest part and centre of which stands Istakhr, the fortress), and over a loamy land intersected and cut up by many scores of canauts which water the plain of Persepolis. On our right as we travel stands a group of three lofty and truncated hills, which go by the name of Myûm Kalah ("Between the Mountains"), but whose real names, according to Hamdallah the Persian historian,

are Istakhr, Schesch, and Skhwan; on our left is Istakhr, its double pylon, its mounds and ruined halls, and the narrow valley leading to Saidan.

At about two miles from the tombs we come to a small marble platform which the natives call Takht-i-Taousht. It measures 37 feet 4 inches square by about 4 or 5 feet in height. In the centre of it is a large square of black stone. From this marble platform we strike off obliquely south-east, because of an intervening canaut.

At the distance of a mile from it, having reached the open plain, we see the far-famed ruins of Persepolis standing apparently at the base of a mountain.

We press on eagerly for this wondrous Takht-i Jamshîd, where we shall see "petrified men," according to the natives, "and a whole population turned into stone for their wickedness," where there are several animals also in the same pitiable state, like those in Upper Egypt.

We spur forward rapidly over the sadly abused plain, over the bhota shrubs, the growing barley, and ill-ploughed loam, past Eeliaut camps, whose people cannot comprehend this haste of ours.

As we approach the ruins they seem to grow into more and more stately proportions, into columns and tiers, and walls, and a lofty terrace, until the moment when, after riding up the splendid step, we halt on the summit of the raised terrace within the area of the second Troy.

The sides of the terrace correspond almost exactly to

the cardinal points of the compass. The hill, or Royal Mount, rises above the level of the great platform something like 200 feet. The north-west and south sides of the terrace are built of what some call dark marble. Starting from the base of the Royal Mount the northern wall of the terrace runs towards the plain to a length of 998 feet 4 inches (according to Porter 926 feet); from the end of the north wall, the western side of the terrace is 1426 feet 9 inches (Porter 1425 feet, Fergusson nearly 1500 feet).

But the walls do not run straight, as there are several recesses in them. On the northern wall are seven, in the eastern are seven, and in the southern are eleven. In measuring the lengths of the walls we do not measure the depth or projection of these recesses; if I had done so the northern wall, instead of being 998 feet 4 inches, would have been calculated at 1274 feet 6 inches.

The walls of the terrace are built with smooth faces like the temple walls of Egypt.

About the middle of the southern wall are four lengthy and broad inscriptions in cuneiform character.

Returning now to the western wall which fronts the plain of Persepolis, we come to the grand staircase. As we face it we see a recession which measures 67 feet in width by 44 feet in depth, arranged in two stories of double stair flights each.

From the lower story a flight ascends southward and northward, each of fifty-seven steps, 22 feet in length, height of each step $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and a tread

of 15 inches. A platform terminates this flight of steps broad enough for a carriage and team to turn round upon.

Then two flights of forty-eight steps, each of equal length, depth and tread with the lower flights, turn from the platform in opposite ways, meeting on a platform which is on a level with the summit of the terrace ; so that from the plain to the terrace you have a double ascent of one hundred and five steps, each step $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches, which will give $33\frac{1}{2}$ feet of a height to the walled terrace upon which the ruins of Persepolis stand. Lest I might have made an error in measurement I dropped the roll of tape down to the base of the wall, and found its height to be 35 feet, but the inequality of the soil below accounted for this discrepancy.

The steps I said were 22 feet in length, but probably 5 or 6 feet of their ends are embedded in the wall.

Supposing they were 6 feet in bed, these blocks would thus measure 28 feet in length, 10 feet in breadth, and 28 inches in thickness. I know of no staircase fit to compare with this of Persepolis.

Going round to the north wall we perceived some sandstone rocks abutting against it, with blocks chiselled from their summit ready for the water blasts, which may be taken as evidence that Persepolis was never finished ; and if you climb up those rocks and look down from the terrace, you will perceive the other rocks of like nature appearing as if the workmen

had given the work up as an endless task, or as if before Persepolis had been finished the spoiler had come and stayed their hands. But whither were these sandstone blocks carried? We do not see any sandstone in the bold and massive masonry of the terrace walls, nor in the palaces on its summit, nor in the ruins about.

Proceeding along the north wall we come to a ravine which divides the Royal Mount from the range behind it.

On the crest of the Royal Mount are the remains of a fort which defended the eastern side of Persepolis.

Walking to the top of the great staircase again directly opposite to us we find the remains of the Propylon of Xerxes as the inscription shows. A portion of it reads:—"I am Xerxes the King, the Great King, the King of Kings, the King of the many peopled countries, the son of King Darius the Achæmenian."

The remains of the Propylon are two massive piers which are distant from each other about 11 feet and rise to the height of 30 feet. Their ends are finished off with bull-bodied figures, whose heads are destroyed but the foreparts stand out like statues, while their bodies are terminated in the inner walls of the portal. The figures are harnessed and in neck clothes plentifully studded with bosses.

Both floor and piers of the Propylon are of dark stone similar to slate stone. The bulls are excellently

sculptured; the majesty of the brutes is fully shown. The length of this first portal is 21 feet. On passing through it we come to two columns which seem to be, as near as I could judge, 60 feet in height from the base. They may be described as follows:—First, a square base; second, a plinth about 4 feet high, with lily leaves and their petioles sculptured conversely around it, upon which stands the shaft about 45 feet in height, and above this a double capital.

The pier heads and inner walls are sculptured with bull-necked figures whose human faces, bearded and crowned, are nearly perfect, and whose wings expand far above their backs, sculptured in alto-relievo.

Many like these may be seen at the British Museum and the Louvre which were taken from the halls of Khorsabad.

The Persians call these bull-men Al-Borak, after the mysterious animal with which Mohammed performed his night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and thence to the seventh heaven.

Continuing our exploration, with our faces turned south, we reach tke "High pillared hall of Chehel Minar," in excavating for the foundations of which the cup of great "Jamshîd" was found. A little to the east and south of the eastern portal just described is a cistern cut in the rock which measures 18 feet by 16 feet. To reach the "Hall of Forty Pillars," which is elevated on a second terrace, we have to ascend another grand double staircase; but this, instead of being in a recession of the terrace, is in a double pro-

jection of the wall of the hall. The first of these, or the nearest to the wall of the terrace, must have been started from the angles of its base; and has a flight of thirty steps 4 inches in height, 14 in the tread, and 16 feet in length. The length of the most forward projection is 86 feet; the steps are thirty in number, of equal height, length, and tread with the others.

Along the walls of each projection following the ascent of the steps are inscriptions, and sculptures of men bearing presents, for the feet of each figure rest on the outlines of the steps similar to those of the staircase. The length of the terrace wall of the superb hall before us is 212 feet.

On gaining the top of the staircase we find ourselves before a multitude of pillars and piers, ruins of pylons, of sculptured walls, huge circular blocks, and a vista of halls. The first hall, "Chehel Minar," which is immediately in front of us, is called by those who profess to know, the "Hall of Xerxes."

This splendid hall measures 394 feet in length, and 380 in breadth. It is divided into four parts: into a central hall of thirty-six columns which stand in six rows of six columns each, of the triple-capital order; a portico or talar fronting the north with twelve columns of the double-capital order already described; a portico fronting west, of twelve columns in two rows of six each, of the double-headed bull order; a portico on the east side of the central hall of twelve columns in two rows of six each, of the grinning double-griffin order—in all 72 columns, out of which stand only

thirteen, making with the two columns at the gate of entrance fifteen altogether, and these are all that are to-day upright at Persepolis. The bases of nearly all of the others may be made out, and some of their plinths are still perfect.

I measured these plinths and found them to be 7 feet 6 inches in diameter, but most of the shafts taper considerably as they reach the capital, being as much as 3 feet less in diameter at the top than at the base. The columns of the portico are 64 feet high.

The Hall of Xerxes is the largest hall at Persepolis, and covers an area of 149,720 square feet. It may be interesting to compare other public structures, palaces and churches with the Hall of Xerxes :—

	Area in square feet.
Hall of Xerxes at Persepolis	149,720
Hall of the "Hundred Columns" at Persepolis	54,051
Temple at Pasargadae (supposed to be)	149,000
Great Temple at Baalbek	46,400
Great Hall at Karnak, Thebes	90,475
Temple of Diana at Ephesus	93,500
Parthenon at Athens	23,028
The Olympeum at Athens	60,531
Temple of Edfu, Egypt	61,480
St. Peter's Church at Rome	265,200
Mezquita at Cordova	200,000
St. Paul's, London	143,820
Cathedral of Seville	105,300
Cathedral of Cologne	118,041
Cathedral of Milan	107,800
Mosque of St. Sophia, Constantinople	65,667
Great Mosque of Damascus	53,875

At the eastern end of the hall I discovered a hole in the floor, which led to a long aqueduct. I travelled

under the floor of the hall and beyond almost as far as the hill, a distance of several hundred feet, sometimes crawling on all-fours, often walking perfectly erect with the roof of the aqueduct two or three feet above my head. I retraced my steps and travelled south and then south-east for several hundred feet, walking perfectly erect, the aqueduct being 4 feet wide and 9 feet high, and then retraced my steps and proceeded west directly under the southern terrace of the great hall, away beneath the palace of Darius, and then was suddenly stopped by seeing an animal crouched in the far end. The animal gave a fierce growl, and being unarmed and alone I prudently retired.

Having mounted to the great hall again we proceeded to the palace of Darius as it is called, which is only a few paces distant. You enter into it through a stately pylon, the jambs of which are remarkable for their solidity and their sculptures. There are two of these pylons ; the sculptures in basso-relievi represent Persian guards facing towards the interior of the palace, their hands grasping spears.

They have the serious, steady look of men aware of their responsibility, who know that they are in the immediate neighbourhood of the great king.

While standing within the portal, there appears before us an antechamber, which once was divided into two parts ; beyond this is a square hall which once had sixteen columns, in four rows of four each—the bases of eight only are visible. On its eastern and

western side are ranged four small apartments : on the eastern they are entered into by one door, on the western by two, on the jambs of which are sculptured the king or archimage with his left hand on the tuft of some animal standing upright, his right laying hold of a dagger which is driven up to the hilt in its belly. On some of these jambs the animal is varied : on one it is an open-mouthed lion, on another it is a lion's body with an eagle's beak, on another it is the unicorn, on another it is a bull. There are eight niches sunk into the walls of this central hall, like false windows. Thick slabs of the finest dark marble are placed at the back ; in the southern wall are four open windows, two on either side of the pylon. Passing through the pylon we come to the portico of the palace, which fronts south. On either side of the portico is a small room, which with the portico fill up the entire southern front. Six bases of columns are easily traced in the portico. The means of descent from the portico is by a double flight of steps, sculptured with the figures of soldiers, and decorated with borders of flower-work. On the western front is another flight of steps likewise sculptured, which was built by Artaxerxes, as the inscriptions which have been deciphered prove.

The palace of Darius stands on another terrace ten feet higher than the great terrace.

Its north and south walls are 96 feet in length, while the eastern and western walls are 132 feet 6 inches.

The palace of Xerxes, also erected on a separate terrace, measures as near as I could make out 150 feet in length by 110 feet in breadth. It has a portico fronting north where twelve columns formerly stood. The portico is flanked by two square chambers entered into by a door. Passing through a pylon at the back of the portico we find ourselves in a vast hall which must have contained thirty-six columns.

Beyond the southern pylon, which is on the western side of the terrace, we emerge upon a platform of cyclopean blocks fitted into the sand rock foundations.

The steps descend from its southern side and terminate near the bottom in the native rock, out of which the lower steps and wall balustrade have been cut.

To recapitulate: we ascended from the plain of Persepolis to the top of the terrace by the great staircase on its western front, and saw the gigantic Propylon before us; then turning to our right with our faces southward, we saw a second terrace raised on the larger one, on which stood the hall of audience of Xerxes. Passing through this hall and descending its southern side, we saw a third terrace which is ten feet higher than the second terrace, on which stands the palace of Darius. Descending the southern side of Darius' palace we had to ascend a fourth terrace, which supports the palace of Xerxes, which is two or three feet lower than the terrace of Darius' palace. Descending the staircase on the southern side of the palace of Xerxes, we came to the fifth terrace at the

extreme southern end, which is ten feet lower than the great terrace, and seems to have been an appendage constructed at a later period.

The magnificent series of palaces which once stood on these several terraces was destroyed by Alexander the Great at a feast. It is related that, excited by the language of Thais, a prostitute of Athens, and crazed with the wine he had drunk, Alexander seized one of the torches and rushed forwards, followed by his inebriate guests who were similarly furnished, with wicked Thais leading the way. The wanton, "like another Helen, fired another Troy."

Justin says of the capture of the city by Alexander, "Next he took Persepolis, the metropolis of the kingdom of Persia, a city which had been eminent for many years, and which was filled with the spoils of the world, as was now first seen at its destruction." This event took place 329 B.C., since which time Persepolis has stood a wonder and a mystery on a plain which, although watered by one of the finest rivers in Persia, is yet as sterile as a desert. But Istakhr in the gorge, famed for its library which Alexander burnt, existed 1000 years later until Yezdekhast, the last of the Sassanian dynasty, the last kingly descendant of the patriarch Jamshîd, fell by the sword of an Arab.

The riches of Persepolis may be imagined when Alexander found 120,000 talents, or £33,000,000, in silver and gold in it. We must leave this scene now for other cities and other lands,—this plain where once

Cyrus the Great, the "Father of his people, and Shepherd of the Lord," marshalled his tens of thousands of Persians, Median, Armenian, Hyrcanian, Caducian, Sadian, and Parthian horsemen; whence Cambyses set out for Egypt; on which Darius reviewed his conquering hosts;—these halls where Xerxes once officiated as Archimagus, which once rung with festive laughter and echoed to stirring music; yes, leave them to the Eeliauts and to their solitude and mystery.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Shiraz—Travellers' Stories—The Famous Ruk-nabad—The Gardens of the Southern Capital—The Pleasures of the Shirazi—Quotations from Saadi, Hafiz and Jami—The Sports of the Shirazi—Saadi's Tomb and Epitaph—The Grave of Hafiz—The Tomb of Bathsheba!—Diary from Shiraz to Bushire—Arrival at Bushire—The Real Persia.

BUSHIRE, PERSIAN GULF. *July 17th*, 1870.

FROM Persepolis and its melancholy plain, and the banks of the Araxes now called the Bandamir, we travelled through a most desolate and mountainous country to Shiraz, famed in Hafiz's song and Saadi's philosophy.

If a traveller, says Saadi, "is thirsty, he asks a man for a drink, and gets buttermilk; only half of it is milk, the other half is water." By which Saadi

endeavoured to illustrate how that a traveller's story is but half true, while the other half is false. Having read much of Saadi as he is translated, while in Persia, I thought and had to think often of the above quotation while advancing towards Shiraz. Said Hafiz the poet—

> "Boy! whatever the frowning zealots say,
> Go! tell them their Eden cannot show
> A stream so clear as Ruk-nabad,
> A bower so sweet as Mousallah!"

Just before I entered the defile of Aliabad I crossed the stream of Ruk-nabad. It was just a yard wide, with nine inches of water in the middle; it was bitter and brackish!

Upon issuing through the gate which bars a hilly defile, Shiraz is seen below in an oval plain set between lofty and grey-coloured mountains. Mosques, minars, madressehs, and palaces among acres of minor houses and groves, are the prominent features of the city, as we view it from the mouth of the pass of Aliabad.

After descending by an easy slope to the plain we find ourselves soon entering a wide avenue along whose sides are walled gardens, cemeteries, ruined caravanserais, and a beggarly half-ruined suburb or two. We cross a steep and narrow bridge over the Zangi-Rûd (a river which is almost always dry), and the Shirazi are about us.

The nauseous odours from decomposing matter, and the far gone decay visible all about, gutter-like

streets, crumbling mud houses, and the people's fanatical impertinence, do not tend to impress one favourably with the city of Hafiz.

Shiraz is a city of traditions ; it is the capital of the province of Fars—old kingdom of Parsa or Persia—and is therefore the successor of Persepolis. Historically it is an old city, traditionally it is much older, for it is said to have been founded by Thur the son of Jamshîd, or Shem who was the son of Noah ; while another Persian writer states it to have been founded by Mohammed son of Cassim, son of Obi Okail, 639 A.D., or the 74th of the Hegira. It was an important city in the time of Saadi, who was born in the year 1175 ; it was a great city under Shah Mansûr when Timur Leng invaded it ; but to-day it is mean and insignificant, and since Kerim Khan, under whom Shiraz reached the height of its fortunes, it has been steadily crumbling to ruin, at least as fast as climatic influences can effect it.

The plain of Shiraz measures about 20 miles by 8, and possesses a rich soil and a delicious climate. The city, which depends upon its various productions, is peopled by about 20,000 souls.

The plain is famous for its gardens—the *Mousallah*, which Hafiz frequented ; the *Dil gushah*, near the tomb of Saadi ; the *Bagh-i-Takht*, "Garden of the Throne" ; the new garden, *Jehua Muma*, "View of the World" ; *Resek-i-Behesht*, "Envy of Paradise." The curious amuse themselves with going to the Piri Sabz, or the "Green old Man," where Hafiz it is said became a

poet by keeping watch throughout forty nights on its summit; also the tombs of Saadi and Hafiz, the Khusr Cave where Mûrtûsa Ali the hermit lived, and the well of Kalah Barder, down which the faithless women of Shiraz were thrown in former times. I cannot describe all these in detail, as the gardens are nearly all alike, and the palaces are similar in their architecture to those of Teheran already described.

The *Bagh-i-Takht* or the "Garden of the Throne" is probably the finest of the gardens. It is shaded with cypress, orange, lime, poplar, chenar, and mulberry trees, while the flowers are of many kinds and hues. The palace is built on seven terraces one above the other. The roof of the palace being certainly 150 feet above the plain.

On each terrace are rows of orange trees; the second terrace has, besides, twenty-seven fountains. On the lowest terrace blooms the white rose of India; another is distinguished for the wide-spreading narcissus.

From the topmost is obtained a most agreeable view of the garden and its beauties, and of the whole plain of Shiraz. The terraces are the favourite resorts of the Shirazi every afternoon.

Here amid his friends inhaling his calian, talking, laughing, gesticulating, between occasional sips of the tea of his own country, or watching the performance of an oriental can-can to the strain of lute and jingle of tambourine by dancing boys, or listening to

recitations from the Shah Nameh, the Southern Persian may be best observed.

I arrived upon such a scene while the "Loves of Zal and Rûdava" by Ferdusi were recited, according to my friend the hospitable Dr. Wills. Calians, iced sherbet, sweetmeats, tea and a seat were offered me by some sociable young men. A band of musicians, consisting of four effeminate and richly dressed boys, and a Dervish with a guitar, performed near by, after which the lads gave us a dance similar to that of the Egyptian Almehs, already described.

The Shirazi are a people whose thoughts dwell upon passionate loves, and shades of trees. They are a people of sleepy eyes and melting moods.

The frequent references to the Persian poets, who are mostly all from Shiraz, "the seat of Science," as it is called, or, as we would style it, the Athens of Persia, drove me to study the various translations of their works which my host Dr. Wills gave me to read.

Saadi was born at Shiraz 1175 A.D., and buried there, having lived 116 solar years. While travelling, he was taken prisoner by the Crusaders, and put to work upon the fortifications of Tripoli. He was finally redeemed and became married to the daughter of an Aleppo merchant. He travelled for thirty years, and lived in solitude for thirty years more, during which he composed his *Ghulistan*, or the "Garden of Flowers," containing stories in prose and sententious sayings. His poetry is contained in the

Bostan, or "Garden of Fruits." From Saadi I can only quote five little verses:—

"Alas! for him who is gone, and has done no work; the trumpet of the march has been blown, and his burden was not bound on!"

"Be merciful, and thou shalt conquer without an enemy."

"Seize the hearts of the world, and be acknowledged as its legitimate sovereign."

"The happy conqueror was not an angel: neither was he encased in enchanted armour. It was by his valour, justice, and mercy that he attained great and happy ends. Be thou brave, just, and merciful, and thou shalt be this hero!"

"Alas! for ages after me, the roses will bloom, and the spring will come, and pass away!"

Saadi was a good old man, a wise sage, a great traveller, and respected by the king and his subjects.

Hafiz Mohammed Shems-ed-dîn was born at Shiraz 1300 A.D. He was a different character from Saadi, and his poems are like Anacreon's—about wine, women, love, and gardens. Of all the poets of his native land he is the most admired by Persians. His works are referred to by the superstitious in the same way as the Sortes-Virgillianæ and often our own Bible. The Sufis evidently believe that Hafiz writes allegorically, but English readers must judge for themselves.

Hafiz sings:—

"Give to Hafiz one or two goblets full measure; bring the wine, whether perdition or salvation be the consequence."

In the Tarji-Band he addresses himself:—

"Oh, Hafiz! What constitutes fortune or wealth, except the society of thy fair one, and the goblet of wine?"

In his odes we find :—

"Drink wine, for when you see a virtuous act of the priest and the judge, they but deceive you."

"Now the only friends who are free from care, are a book of odes and a goblet of wine."

"Travel unencumbered, for the paths of safety are narrow, like the glass of wine, for our precious life is not to be recalled."

"The roses have come, nor can anything afford so much pleasure as a goblet of wine."

"Be thankful, and drain the bowl in the garden, for in another week the roses will be no more."

"Give me such a bowl, by Heaven! as will give me no after headache."

"Fill the golden cup with ruby wine, and give it to the poor and distressed."

"Pass your five days of existence in pleasure, for life is fleeting."

"Shall I tell you the advice which I heard last night from an invisible voice, when I was drunk, and fell at the tavern?"

"Drink thyself to contentment, and smooth your wrinkled brow, for the door of choice is against us."

"Burst your fetters, and do not think of heaven, for the science of the astronomer will not solve the problem."

"Receive the bowl with respect, for it is composed of the dust of Jamshd, of Bahman, and Kobad."

"Who knows whither the Kyanian is gone? Who has found the goblet of Jem?"

"Reserve your hearts, for the most elaborate beauties are not worth a glass of wine."

"Depart, and search for the riches of contentment, seat yourself in the corner of safety; for the riches of the sea, or the earth are overbalanced by a moment's trouble."

Jami, who was a Sufi of the most extreme order, sings :—

"The almighty majesty of love has no form: it shines in the garments of Lailî, and deprives Majnûn of peace and rest."

"There was nothing between thee but the veil of Uzra."

"A thousand afflictions flowed on the unhappy warning."

"Truly you sported with love; Wamig and Majnûn were but names."

"Jami saw the light of a cup-bearer, and bowed to it, as the glass is inclined towards the goblet."

"Sometimes the wine, sometimes the cup, I call thee! Sometimes the lure, sometimes the pet, I call thee."

"Excepting thy name, there is not another better; by what appellation shall I call thee?"

And so it seems that the Shirazi follow the counsels of Hafiz and Jami. Seated on little chairs on those terraces one above another, which are like the gradines of an amphitheatre, listening to recitations from their epic poet, and the sound of tabor, and lute, with their eyes peering into the peaceful solemnity of cypress shadows upon the approaching twilight of evening, and the golden lights which are suspended above—do not these Shirazi reflect the customs of the old Athenians, who, upon Hymettus' slopes overlooking their dear Attica and its pellucid stream, were thus wont to enjoy themselves; or of the citizens of Antioch as they looked down from the Silpian Hill upon the classic Orontes and the Daphnian Grove?

It was Friday the next day, and as Friday evenings are devoted to festivity and athletic games, I gave up all other arrangements in order to be present at the exercises. The aristocracy of Shiraz, resplendent in rich kûbas, brocade, chintz, and silk, kolahs of the softest black wool of Tartary on their heads, and their nether limbs loosely covered with silken zeri-jamas, were out in force; so also were the Kajars, descendants of Fath Ali Shah and Mohammed Shah. The

children were dressed like gay dolls, and gave a decided picturesqueness to the gathering.

The vendors of sweetmeats apostrophised the monied urchins to buy—buy for Allah's sake; and under the shade of the cypress were a score of little industries going on, such as the selling of calian whiffs, iced sherbet, snow, fruit water, and unctuous candy. Boys—for boys and chickens are the same all over the world—fancied the candy mostly, while the adults ate lettuce dipped in the water of the classic Ruk-nabad and exchanged opinions upon the gay and brilliant scene. But the young men and lads disdained the unctuous jelly, the ripe apricots, plums, sweetmeats, ices, and sherbets, and, mounted on their fleet horses, preferred "the swift race, and conflict of the field," the Parthian *ke-kaj* and the rough Scythian sport.

The *ke-kaj* consists in a man racing at full speed, being chased by an equally swift pursuer with a spear, and when presently the pursued horseman turns round in the saddle and fires, his gun is supposed to drop his enemy with a single shot. Then there is the *jerîd* exercise, which, after the manner of the ancient Scythians, is played by Tartars, Gallas, and the Turks at the Hippodrome of Stamboul. The *jerîd* is a short stick about four feet long, which as a man gallops after an imaginary enemy, he holds directed towards him, and suddenly launches at him with all his force, and with an aim which, unless parried, will certainly produce serious effects. The Shirazi are also partial to wrestling, the professors of which are called

Pahlawans after the strong men of Persian antiquity—the Rustams and the Zohrabs.

On the whole the Persian gathering is a fine well-dressed assemblage, unpainted on canvas as yet, but often imitated in Cairo, Stamboul, and Damascus. Everybody seems happy and contented—the young lads and sturdy youth love the danger of the *ke-kaj* and the *jerîd;* the little boys love their candy; the adults enjoy the shade of the cypress and the tit-bits of social scandal; and freeman and helot are on an equality for the day.

I could not omit to visit the Hafizieh or the tomb of Hafiz. It is situated close to the Isfahan road to the right of the "Thousand and one Tombs," in the poet's own groves.

The grave of Hafiz is covered with a block of alabaster about 8 feet long, 3 feet broad, and about 20 inches in thickness. On its surface are neatly cut select verses from his odes. It is surrounded by a cemetery.

The trees which formerly graced the Hafizieh have been cut down and sold as fuel. The divan and odes of the poet, which were kept in a chamber near the tomb, are in the library of the Shah; no admirer of the poet comes forward to show the stranger his tomb, while all around it lie buried the dead bodies of dervishes who, having defiled the tomb with their filthy carcases while alive, continue the defilement when dead.

From the Hafizieh I rode towards the Saadieh—the tomb of Saadi, poet, traveller and philosopher, the

good old patriarch of his era! Close by his tomb is "Saadi's Hill," where the philosopher and poet loved to spend his last years.

The tomb, consisting as far as we can see of a great block of polished limestone of a reddish colour, is placed in the centre of the floor of a small building in a vaulted recess under an arch. A book was shown to us composed of the "Bostan" and "Ghulistan," highly "illuminated" with scenes taken from the poems. This is said to have been written by his own hand. About twenty years ago the roof which Kerim Khan had built fell down, but a new one has lately replaced it.

Saadi has written an epitaph in his "Bostan" which he had desired should be inscribed over his tomb. It reads thus:—

"Oh passenger who walkest over my grave, think of the virtuous persons who have gone before me. What has Saadi to apprehend from being turned to dust? He was but earth when alive. He humbled himself to the ground, and like the wind he encompasses the whole world. He will not continue dust long, for the winds will scatter him over the whole universe. Yet as long as the garden of science bloomed, not a nightingale warbled so sweetly in it. It would be strange if such a nightingale should die, and not a rose grow on its grave."

The mountain to the right and south was formerly famous for being crowned with the "Castle of Fahender," of which only a single tower is left. It is

now celebrated for having a very deep well into which are dropped the faithless wives and concubines of Shiraz. This is the report at least. It is called the Kaleh-i-Bander. Tradition states it to be the work of demons. The well being so deep—variously estimated from 420 to over 1000 feet—of course furnished admirable means to dispose of a faithless wife by a vengeful husband, and no doubt it has been the grave of many a one. But this could not be found out without an exploration, and there is not a living Shirazi bold enough to attempt it.

About three or four miles further east is another "Mader-i-Suliman's" tomb. Truly Bathsheba is honoured above all women in the East! But how many mummies of Pharaoh's daughter, swords of Saleh-ed-din, of Charlemagne, the Cid, Frederick the Great, and triplicates of great people's relics, are there in Europe? However, this "Mader-i-Suliman" near Shiraz is of the Persepolitan age, according to its sculptures, masonry and architecture. It was a building of about 30 feet square, entered into by three portals. The ruins of the walls are of white marble. Beyond this ancient ruin, about a couple of miles off, are three tablets chiselled in the rock, which are said to be relics of the Sassanidæ.

I should like to dwell longer upon what may be seen at Shiraz; but here I am at my third column already. What further I have to say about Persia must be in brief notes transcribed from my note-book.

Shiraz has six gates in its old and ruined walls, and is said to contain six thousand five hundred houses, eighty public baths, and fifteen Mûsjids or mosques, besides several colleges. Its bazaars are long and interesting, but less so than those of Ispahan or Teheran—though the Vekil bazaar is among the finest in Persia.

It has ten mahallahs or districts. The most famous villages near Shiraz are those of Musjid-i-Bardi, Khûlar, Aklid, and Bezah. Musjid-i-Bardi boasts one thousand gardens, and fifty thousand vineyards; it also supplies Shiraz with snow from its ice pits. Khûlar produces the grapes from which Shiraz's ruby wine is made. Aklid exports very good apples to the city market.

Bezah possesses a meadow where are reared six thousand mares which belong to the chief of the Eeliauts. The produce of the other villages is chiefly confined to wheat, barley, apricots, peaches, melons, vegetables, grapes, opium, saffron, rice, Indian corn; and from Kazerûn, Shiraz receives dates, oranges, and almonds. The manufactures of the villages are confined to dungaree, soap, common carpets, wooden spoons, earthenware, &c. The mountains in the vicinity of Shiraz are composed chiefly of gypsum, sandstone, limestone, gneiss and basalt. They are very bare and present a greyish, crumbling appearance. The snow which falls in winter is gathered into pits in sufficient quantities to supply the inhabitants of Shiraz all summer.

The exports of Shiraz are dyes, silk, opium, wool, madder-root, gall-nuts, cotton, quince seed, cummin seed, saffron, hides, brass, drugs, carpets, and rugs, mumbuds or felt pieces.

The imports consist of, cottons, calicoes, cheap-prints cloth, firearms, powder, lead, beads, looking-glasses, fancy cutlery, and small notions of the fancy kind.

The following notes of the journey to Bushire have the merit of being expressive if brief :—

July 18th, 1870.—Left Shiraz, at 10.30 A.M. for Chenar-i-Rahdar, distant eight miles; heat, 114° Fahrenheit. The mountains and plains were smoking hot, and the vapour surged up my nostrils like steam. 2 P.M. I arrived at caravanserai almost crazed with fever. I shall have to lie on a verminous bed of straw in this evil-smelling cell the whole of to-morrow.

July 20th.—Started for Khan-i-Zinian, a journey of sixteen miles. Rode through a desolate country. Hills after hills, valleys after valleys, all scorched by the sun, neglected by nature, and deserted by honest man. It is infested by lions, laughing hyena, caracal, fox, Eeliaut robbers and predatory Baktiari. Heat, 110° Fahrenheit. Highest altitude during the day, 7200 feet above the sea.

July 21st.—To Myûm Kotal, "Between the Hills," 28 miles distant. Heat at 11 A.M., 112° Fahrenheit. Highest altitude reached, 7600 feet. From the rocky vicinity of Khan-i-Zinian, we dropped into the valley

of Dasht-i-Arzen. There is a remarkable spring of water, and trees of antique birth near it. The valley is the grazing-ground for the Eeliaut mares, whose owners are desperate-looking savages.

We ascended a most ugly slope of a mountain, thickly clothed with wild fig, cherry, and almond trees, where the maneless lion is often met by travellers.

Such caravans as we met cried out to us, "Beware! beware of the lion!"

Having reached the summit of the mountain, I looked down upon a fearfully disrupted area—an agglomerate of ugly naked mountain vertebræ, with the devil's own passes between them, and the whole seething in the heat. Finally reached Myûm Kotal after 11 hours' travel.

July 22nd.—Had a slight attack of fever during the night. Was so weak this day that I could not stand. The thermometer marks 110° Fahrenheit. Myûm Kotal is the finest caravanserai in South Persia, but the people about it are rogues. We were twice invaded during the night, but as we were watchful we lost nothing.

Heat, 106° at 12 P.M. I crossed myself, repeated I don't know how many aves. I had no beads, therefore could not count them. My aves wouldn't march, as the Shah says. But I prayed for the soul of dead Abbas the Great, and thanked Heaven there were such places as caravanserais in the deserts of Farsistan.

Was it the wine of Dasht-i-Arzen that gave me such a sleep this afternoon? Or its water, the best in Persia—cold as snow?

July 23rd.—Began to slide down the south face of the mountain at dawn. Yes, actually to slide down, baggage mules, servants, and myself—down, down, one thousand feet! The slope was covered with round two-pounder stones; the first touch of a mule's foot on the stones, and it slid a yard, another foot another yard. However, our mules survived it, and I believe I survived it. Thank the Lord!

We had no sooner reached the bottom, and each of us was feeling if the bones were still sound, when an incident occurred.

A naked man came out from behind the wild almond bushes, and cried out for help in the name of Allah! Of course he had been robbed of every kran he possessed. He was bound for Shiraz with three loaded mules; when half-way between Kamarij and Myûm Kotal, three armed men bade him stop and take off his kuba (coat), then his karbalik (gown or robe) of good stuff, then his peerahum (shirt), then his linen zir-jama, then his slippers and socks; then they told him to lie down, and they flogged him with switches cut from the wild almond bushes; and here he was in a bruised and most miserable plight. Would we help him? Certainly, as we think of the good Samaritan! May it not be our turn next?

We marched together closely, and kept a sharp watch around. We passed Kamarij Plain safely

We reached Kotal-i-Pirizan—the Old Woman's Pass —and from its summit looked down a zigzag road which leads to the valley of Kazerûn 1500 feet below. Myûm Kotal Pass, and the thousand feet of rolling stones, were nothing to it. To compare anything to it for wildness and bleakness, I should have to unite the ruggedness of Sierra Nevada with the desolation around the Dead Sea.

Having survived the perils of the Pass of the "Old Woman," we had next to begin the descent of the Kotal-i-Dokhter, or the Pass of the "Daughter."

The unfortunate man whom we had found in such wretched condition was very suspicious of this pass. He fancied he saw the muzzle of an Eeliaut gun behind every boulder; the echo of our horses' feet among the crags, which were on the topple round about us, recalled to his mind the terrors which he had lately gone through. After an hour we cried quits with the "Daughter," and emerged upon a swamp to our left, and near by the ruins and sculptures of Sapor, conqueror of the Roman Emperor Valerian. The ruins are those of his fire temples; the sculptures are the records of his triumph over the Romans.

A fragment of Sapor's castle rests on the Acropolis, which overlooks a beautiful but small plain. The sculptures represent Valerian kneeling before Sapor; Adenathus of Palmyra, consort of Queen Zenobia, sending camels bearing presents to him; some Pahlawi inscriptions; and, at the entrance of a large cavern, lies the prostrate statue of Sapor, over fifteen

feet in length. The sculptures are similar to those at Naksh-i-Rustam and Naksh-i-Rejib. The castle site is well chosen, and a clear stream runs through it, which is called after the victorious monarch. Ten miles off is Kazerûn or Kanzerûn, surrounded by groves of palms, a large town of six thousand inhabitants, but rapidly thinning because of a famine which is extending over all Persia. The people are leaving by scores ; and yet a finer plain is not to be found in Southern Fars.

July 24th.—To Konar Takhteh, eight farsakhs, or about thirty miles. We are descending rapidly towards the sea, and are already 4000 feet below Shiraz. We have 1500 feet again to descend today, by a pass which could be defended by one hundred resolute men against ten thousand. The rocks are gypsum and basalt.

Rumours of ravaging bands of Eeliauts are common along the road, and we are advised that we risk our baggage and lives by not accompanying a larger caravan. Konar Takhteh is situated in the plain of Khisht —an extensive plain famous for its groves of palms. This plain must be 1500 feet above the Persian Gulf.

July 25th.—Went down another pass, the Kotal-i-Mallu, which is the worst of all except that of the "Daughter." Over 1200 feet of perpendicular descent brought us to Daliki, a distance of sixteen miles from Konar Takhteh. We are told that it is the last pass, and we are now on the sandy plain of the Persian Gulf. There are a score of the extensive

palm groves in view. We only stop at Daliki for a noon siesta, after which we resume our march fourteen miles further on to Borazjûn.

Between Daliki and Borazjûn there are several naphtha wells, which might be worked with advantage by any community except that of Muslims.

Borazjûn is inhabited by a most murderous set of people, and is famous in history for being the scene of a battle between the English troops and the Persians, February 8th, 1857. I am not likely to forget the scores of scorpions I saw at this place.

To Bushire, by way of Shif, is twenty-five miles. The land is a dead level of sand, but upon which, especially near Borazjûn, melons, cucumbers, barley and wheat, as well as palms, thrive.

As we approach the sea, the sand breathed over by the humid airs from Oman's Sea becomes moist. Soon the green waters are seen, and though the heat is 104° Fahrenheit, yet the breezes from the Gulf blowing round "Selama's sainted cape," give us life and spirit to withstand it. An hour later we are walking on the roof of the hospitable house of Mr. Robert Paul, who, without letter of introduction, generously said he hoped his house would be my own while in Bushire.

So we have gone through Persia together, from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, a distance of nine hundred and thirty-eight miles!

What do we know of it now that we have traversed its length? This much—I speak for myself: I have

been most wofully disappointed. Instead of being one of the happiest countries under the sun, "the garden of verdure and fruit trees, and rose-bushes haunted by nightingales," I find it to be the worst-governed, the worst-cultivated, and the most ill-watered country in the world! The Persian upland is more like a true desert than any inhabited country I know of.

Belûchistan consists of sand, naked limestone, and gypsum. Arabia Petrea presents nothing but sandy wastes and mountains of scoriæ. Mesopotamia and Kurdistan are wildernesses. Turkestan is an expanse of aridity. A large part of Greece is unlovely and bare; but Persia, an empire 625,000 square miles in extent, that is to say, three times greater than France—a country which taught some things in architecture to Greece, which once ruled the world—is now a desert. The Shah, from this great Empire of his, receives only $7,500,000 as revenue; while Egypt, which is only a sixtieth part of the size of Persia, affords the Viceroy's Government a revenue of $25,000,000!

Yet Persia is the country which sent Xerxes with an army of 2,000,000 soldiers to Greece; whence Cambyses started for the conquest of the Egyptian Pharaoh, which reduced Babylon, Nineveh, and the best part of Asia to submission—so that it lacks not the essentials of prosperity and greatness. If Persia once supported so many millions of human beings, whose warriors stormed over the world, why can it not support its present population of 8,000,000?

I could give a thousand answers. But in three words the cause may be said to be, "Despotic Government," the "Muslim Religion," and "Universal Ignorance." Then there are secondary causes, such as want of rain, great heat, and avarice of the aristocracy, &c. &c. But we have seen France prosper under a despot, and Russians prospering to an astonishing degree under the Czar; and we know that India is prospering, though the government of it is a military despotism. Persia prospered under Shah Abbas, and Shah Abbas was a despot.

The Shah's Ministers deplore the condition of the country, and can draw up a schedule of its necessities as well as any European. They are as clever in dispute as Spanish politicians, and more witty; the Persian merchant is a keen fellow at trade; the peasant is industrious, frugal, and temperate—a man of large and powerful frame. The Persians have had poets and writers of some renown, and the present chief priest of Ispahan is reported to be a good dialectician. Is it not curious that such people permit the Turks to excel them as a nation? Some writers have said that the Persians are the Frenchmen of Asia, but it would be truer to call them the Greeks of the East.

Talk to a Greek Minister about his country, and he will tell you his country is great and prospering, and immediately his imagination runs away with him, and he speaks of the regeneration of Europe or Asia, through Greek influence! A Persian Minister is

addicted to the same style of language. He is always going to do great things, but all the while he wastes his talents in getting a better position by purchase, and when he has acquired it, he devotes his talents to amassing money, and it is then "Every man for himself," and "Allah for Persia."

The Shah is going to Kerbela in October, and he has ordered a tent to be made of Cashmere shawls, which shall cost 300,000 krans, or £12,000. Though according to Islam law kings are exempt from making pilgrimages and observation of feasts, yet the Shah is going to Kerbela, and his trip will cost something like $500,000, rivalling Mahadi for extravagance. The journey involves suffering and spoliation of the peasants *en route;* his army of followers will never pay for anything, and they will exact tooth money, as pay for the wear of their teeth.

It is said that the Shah has given a concession to M. le Norman, of Paris, to construct a railroad from Teheran to Shah Abdul Azzim, a length of seven miles—which is a mere toy for his own personal convenience.

As the great drawback to Persia is its want of water, a wise Shah, instead of spending £600,000 in building a costly toy of a railway, or paying £12,000 for a tent, or £100,000 for a pilgrimage, would devote that money to supplying Persia with water. It could be done for £1,000,000.

A great deal of snow falls during winter. If, instead of permitting that snow to waste, there were

bunds or reservoirs constructed along the bases of all the principal mountains, and water was stored from the many fine rivers which now run to waste, almost every inch of the plains of Persia might be cultivated, the population would multiply, and Persia might yet become a powerful factor in Asiatic politics.

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